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CIVILISATION OR CIVILISATIONS

An Essay on the Spenglerian Philosophy of History

By

E. H. GODDARD *and* P. A. GIBBONS

With an Introduction by

FERDINAND CANNING SCOTT SCHILLER, M.A., D.SC.

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INTRODUCTION

BY F. C. S. SCHILLER, M.A., D.SC.

WHAT reasons are there for our interest in history? Primarily, no doubt, it is an interest in story-telling and a love of entertainment; for story-tellers soon discover how much it adds to the interest of their tales to be able to say that what they narrate really happened once upon a time. Still, this is not a sufficient explanation, for after all it is obvious that romance may be substituted for history, often with the happiest results æsthetically. Accordingly we find that with some peoples legends take the place of history, and completely satisfy their curiosity about the past. Thus the peoples of India appear to care very little for history and have never troubled to compile it.

A second reason, less attractive but more potent in educational quarters, is the use of history for the purpose of instilling into youth socially approved opinions about matters of ethics and politics, and of teaching the young

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to admire the great and good and to execrate evildoers and the enemies of their country; or, in other words, history ministers to the needs of social propaganda. This is the function which best explains the place which history holds in education everywhere, if we are not content simply to say that it is taught because it *can* be taught, being a subject which demands from the learner no faculty but a retentive memory.

From this point of view, however, history is not a wholly satisfactory subject. It does not always teach the right moral lessons. It does not always show that the righteous triumphed and the wicked were laid low, even when the historian shows every willingness to accept the victorious cause as *ipso facto* pleasing to the gods. The obvious moral to be deduced from the bloodstained pages of history is that nothing succeeds like success rather than that honesty is the best policy, and the possibilities it exemplifies are rather those of human depravity and atrocity than those of virtue and loving-kindness. Politically, also, it is but rarely that even the most patriotic historian can represent the history of his country as an uninterrupted ascent to greater glory and power,

and its moral record as untarnished; indeed, broadly speaking, an impartial judge of human history is ever tempted to view it as at bottom nothing but the aimless, unending and sickening record of human crime and folly.

Intellectually, also, history seems far from satisfactory. At first sight it presents us with just a jungle of uncomprehended "facts," true and false, credible and incredible, unique and incapable of repetition, without any visible meaning or connection. A mind which plunges guideless into this jungle must surely go astray. It is clear that such "facts" cannot be swallowed as they stand. The raw facts must be cooked, to become palatable they must be doctored. They cannot stand as reported. They must be sifted. The problem of writing a history, therefore, out of the raw materials tradition affords, is essentially a problem of *selection,* of evaluating the facts alleged, of picking out the true, of rejecting the false, of discounting lies and distortions, of tracing connections, and of revealing the significance of events. Every history worthy of the name rests on a selection and an interpretation.

But on what principles shall our selection be made? It is evident, in the first place, that

out of the same material a variety of selections *can* be made, which will yield different histories. Historians need have no fear of being thrown out of employment by the compilation of a final history of the past. Even if the continuation of the course of events did not demand new histories, new developments of the past, new points of view and new standards would always occasion a rewriting of history; every age demands a *new* history of its past.

It is evident, secondly, that our selections must be *guided* by some principle and so that we shall need something of the nature of a philosophy of history. If we mean thereby nothing more than a principle of interpretation, it is clear that such philosophies are not merely harmless but indispensable, and that any interpretation which really works, or even provides the mind with a clue through the chaos of happenings, will be of value in the teaching and understanding of history.

The most philosophic reason, however, for studying history has still to be mentioned. It is derived from the relation of the past to the future and from the functions of scientific "law." Ever since man acquired a mind capable of thinking he has pertinaciously tried to

predict the future. All the sciences, and most of the *pseudo*-sciences, have pursued this aim, with what is, on the whole, an amazing success. They are all modes of divination, and are esteemed and deemed true in proportion as their predictions come true. Success in prediction is the ultimate touchstone by which we distinguish a science from a *pseudo*-science, pinning our faith to Newtonian gravitation and rejecting judicial astrology. The latter was the first science to be formally established and endowed; but though, prior to experience, it did not seem more incredible that the planets should rule human affairs than that the moon should control the tides, the predictions of astrology have failed to justify themselves, whereas those based on the scientific notion of "laws of Nature" have gone on from triumph to triumph and carried all before them.

Yet in itself the assumption of "law" was quite as odd as any mode of divination. Its presumption seemed grotesque; but it has proved itself a notion to conjure with. It assumed that out of the hurly-burly of events attentive observation could extract a fixed, unchanging formula, timeless and yet applicable to any time past or future, according to which events

were sure to happen, and by means of which—if its "variables" were properly determined and its blanks filled up—the future could be predicted with almost any degree of accuracy. It mattered not at all that such a "law" was a manifest abstraction, a false metaphor, and a trap continually beguiling its users by misleading associations, that it proceeded on the fiction that the particular circumstances and values of each of its "cases" were irrelevant and could safely be ignored, and that, more frequently than not, it owed its extraction, not to unbiassed observation, but to prejudice, guesswork and fancy; its practical success overcame all scruples.

Still less was it noticed that the *permanence* of natural law was a sheer assumption which actual observation was pitiably inadequate to attest, and that, as a method, the explanation of events by "laws" audaciously claimed the right of reducing the new to the old, and so involved an obvious *fiction*, intended to eliminate the flavour of novelty which clings to all actual happening. For the new as such is unpredictable; it is only in so far as we can hail it as something old in a transparent disguise that we contrive to "understand" it. In strictness,

however, no history ever quite repeats itself; though there is sense in saying that it does. For there would be no "lessons" to be drawn from history unless the belief in repetitions served to throw light upon the development of events.

It is, moreover, this practical desire for guidance which inspires our interest in the future, as in the past. We desire to know the future not for its own sake, but to prepare for what is coming, to exploit it by intelligent anticipation, and to avoid the dangers which it threatens. There are, therefore, good pragmatic reasons for our interest in prophecy.

The practice of prophecy, then, is natural and defensible. It is thoroughly legitimate—provided it is successful. It is also well not to grow too squeamish about the foundations on which our prophets build, nor to condemn them because (like the builders of modern villa residences) they often use the *débris* of ancient rubbish heaps. Many of the most brilliantly successful prophecies of the day have rested on nothing more substantial than the intuitions of genius. Others have justified themselves by predicting the further developments of scientific discoveries. Messrs. Goddard and

Gibbons have chosen to take their stand upon the "law" of civilisation which they believe Oswald Spengler to have discovered.

This law, which, like all laws, is not a product of mere observation, is of course an interpretation of history. It conceives civilisation as a sort of spiritual entity, taking on successive shapes or incarnations in the course of history and having in each case a determinate and approximately equal term of life, with a period of incubation, adolescence, maturity and decay, and running its predestined course through all these stages. Moreover, according to Spengler—and this is what it immediately concerns us to realise—our present Western Civilisation has by now entered upon the last of these stages, the period of decay, and its downfall is impending. It may linger on for a few more centuries, but cannot escape from the "law" that dooms it.

There is not a little in the present state of affairs that seems to suggest such an interpretation, and Spengler's prediction, as might have been expected, has had a *succès fou* in Germany. His book, "Der Untergang des Abendlandes," has been a "best seller," and has recently appeared in English. But in a coun-

try where serious reading is a hobby of the few, and not a custom of the many, even prophets of woe stand in need of interpreters; so Messrs. Goddard and Gibbons have rightly judged that their exposition and illustration of Spengler's principles might do much to establish and confirm his "law" of civilisation.

This "law" is itself a good example of the thesis it asserts. For it appears to be a recurrence of an old idea, of the doctrine of cosmic cycles, which found so much favour in the eyes of Plato and the Indian sages; and (at intervals) ever since, right down to Herbert Spencer and Nietzsche, reputable thinkers have at least played with the idea.

In spite, however, of these eminent sponsors it remains a difficult proposition to prove, and little is gained by overstating its claims to truth. It may be called a "law," but it is hardly an explanation, for it has an air of being empirical rather than intelligible, and it is a mistake to ascribe to natural "laws" any power to coerce the events they formulate. It is true, no doubt, that nations and civilisations rise and fall, but that they *all* do so may be a series of coincidences, and due to different causes in each case. And even if the same causes

operate in all cases they need not be anything recondite; the decline and fall of a civilisation may always be due to human stupidity and to a reiteration of the same fatal blunders, rather than to the blind necessity of an inexorable "law." We should reckon moreover with the possibility that the cosmic "cycles" are really *spirals* and with the irreversibility of all cosmic processes, while allowance must also be made for the fact that, as we have seen, no "law" can provide for or guard against the intrusion of real novelties, the "accidental variations" to which even mechanistic Darwinism has to trace back the upward urge of "evolution."

Hence it is probably better to take Spengler's ideas as interesting suggestions rather than as established dogmas. I am not sure that Messrs. Goddard and Gibbons themselves would claim much more for them than that they provide stimulus and heuristic hypotheses serviceable in the teaching of history; but even if they sanctioned larger claims, I should not myself care to go beyond welcoming them, together with similar predictions by others, as possible clues to our future. We need not expect all, nor perhaps any, of them to be completely verified. But a multiplicity of predic-

tions will do no harm; even if it is no guarantee of safety, it at least increases the chances of success, and in any case the audacious forecasts of Prometheus, the prophet, will be more valuable than the caution of Epimetheus, the historian, whose wisdom dates from after the event. For these reasons English readers may confidently be recommended to embark on the exploration of the Spenglerian philosophy of history under the able guidance of Mr. Goddard and Mr. Gibbons.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

The idea of progress has been one of the typical beliefs of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, a faith which has, consciously or unconsciously, engendered in us a feeling of superiority over the past; and though the war has shattered so many of our illusions, we cling all the more ardently to our belief in progress, which almost alone enables us to take an optimistic view of the future of the human race. Any such forecast of the future must, however, involve a comparison between the present and the past, and in any such comparison some standard of progress is indispensable. Now at first sight our belief in progress seems well founded. Progress has certainly taken place in science, in thought and in all branches of knowledge. We are convinced also that

progress has taken place in social order and political institutions. We have definite grounds for believing that humanity has progressed in religious ideals, in ethical action, in humanitarian theory. We hope, though it is perhaps only a pious hope, that there has been progress in æsthetic appreciation. Thus all the great branches of human achievement, art, science, religion, politics, society, thought, everything in fact which goes to constitute what we call civilisation, are affected by a discussion of the reality of progress.

But this belief in progress has recently encountered a decisive challenge. The facts of history which attest this progress show also that there has been no continuity of progressive development. Civilisation does not show any kind of steady arithmetical progression—but appears to advance by fits and starts. Nor is civilisation one and indestructible; it has its ups and downs. It consists of a series of civilisations, springing up sporadically in diverse localities and periods, and not infrequently passing away without leaving a legitimate successor. The collapse of the Roman Empire and the period of the Dark Ages is not a unique case; it can be paralleled

in other cases, in remoter and less known localities and periods, and the rapid efflorescence of the Arabian culture also is not unparalleled. Reasons may no doubt be given for each of these peculiar phenomena, but they are of the sort which consists in wisdom after the event, and which the brain of an ingenious historian could allege equally well for events which have never taken place. The fact remains that history in no wise shows a clear line along which civilisation has constantly progressed; taken on the whole, it shows rather a chaotic series of human achievements, sometimes isolated from each other, sometimes developing in sequence for a long period and inexplicably coming to an end.

It was reflection on these and other facts that prompted Oswald Spengler to propound a Law of Civilisation which accounts for the rise and fall of civilisations. Into this apparent chaos his "Untergang des Abendlandes" has succeeded in introducing a very remarkable order. Instead of lumping together all the achievements of humanity and tracing or trying to trace a connection between them, he has divided these achievements into nine groups or eras. Each of these groups he regards

as constituting a distinct civilisation. He finds that nine times in the history of humanity has a civilisation arisen which has been capable of high achievement in art, in science, in thought, in religion and in social organisation. A table giving a list of these civilisations is given on p. 6, and other tables representing their achievements in politics and thought, will be found on pp. 8-11.

These tables will give some idea of the extent of territory covered by the nine civilisations, the periods in which the civilisation spirit is at work and, to a very limited extent, the general course of the development of politics and thought in those civilisations concerning which the evidence is attainable.

In the first table some of the dates are only approximate, as the archæologists, especially the Egyptologists, differ very widely in their estimates. It will be seen that in every case the civilisation extends over very much greater areas in its later than in its preliminary stages.

In the second table the political development is given. On the whole it seems that the form of government depends on the inability or ability of the individual to give his allegiance and support to a distant government. In the feudal stage local authorities, *e.g.*, in

Western Europe "barons," are all-important. In the period of the "real state" it becomes possible to include greater areas under one authority, *e.g.*, the city states in the classical civilisation, the sixteenth century in England, France, Spain, in Western Europe. About 200 years afterwards this form no longer seems to be satisfactory. Larger states tend to spring up and there is a period of disturbance. At the same time the rise of large cities brings the fourth class, the democracy of the towns, into prominence and lends an element of instability to the government. Finally there is the empire stage, when the whole area entrusts its government to one authority. In the third table the development of types of thought can only be described in the simplest way, and, the relation of one thinker to another in a similar period in another civilisation, can only be understood when all the influence of each civilisation is allowed for.

In each of the nine cases this civilisation has passed through or is passing through a similar cycle of development in all these respects. From past history, therefore, we may infer that when development has reached its limit, no further achievement will be produced. In

The Civilisations

Designation.	Date.	Early Locality.	Later Extension.
Sumerian Akkadian.	3200–1700 B.C.	Persian Gulf.	Northwards to Babylonia.
Egypt.	2800?–1100 B.C.	Abydos.	Memphis, Heliopolis and M. of Nile.
Hittite Assyrian.	1800–333 B.C.	Boghaz Keuoi, Asia Minor.	Assyria, Persia, Babylonia.
Chinese.	1500?–0 B.C.	Hoang-Ho Valley.	Yang Tse-Kiang Valley.
Hindu.	1500–0 B.C.	Punjab.	India.
Classical.	1200 B.C.–A.D. 200.	Peloponnese, Asia Minor.	Roman Empire.
Arabian.	A.D. 0–1400.	Syria, Asia Minor.	Spain to India, including all south coast of Mediterranean (the India of the Paranas).
Maya Civilisation.	A.D. 200–1500, destroyed by Spaniards.	Yucatan.	Mexico, Central America, Peru.
West European.	A.D. 900–2300?	West Europe.	The World.
Russian.	A.D. 1800.	Russia.	—

eight cases a human society in a definite locality has risen through a steady course of artistic, social, and scientific progress, extending over 1,400 years, after the lapse of which the society has ceased to be artistic, social or scientific in any but the crudest sense. We are ourselves the product of the ninth civilisation of this sort, which started somewhere about 900 in Western Europe and has lasted up till the present day. We can see that our European civilisation has passed through some of this cycle of development and may infer that it will complete it in the future.

Thus history, according to Spengler's law, will be found to show an order curiously like the order of the Periodic Table of the chemical elements. The elements are divided into octaves, and the elements in the octaves stand in certain definite relations to each other. Each element has a definite place in its octave, a definite relation to the element before and after it; it has also a striking similarity to elements similarly placed in other octaves. From the table, as it was then known, Mendeleyeff could prophesy the existence of elements still unknown, and could predict several of their characteristics by comparing them with others

Approximate Period.	Form of Government.	Babylon.	Egypt.	Hittite-Assyrian
Pre-civilisation.	Amorphous Tribes.	Kish.	Thinites.	Kossæans.
0–200	Empire Period. Feudalism, first stage.	—	Dynasty IV.	Boghaz Keuoi.
200–400	Feudalism, increase of Nobles' power.	Lagash, Ur, (Patesi).	Dynasty VI.	Boghaz Keuoi.
400–600	Feudalism, last stage.	Entemani. Enneatum.	Dynasty VII.–IX.	Boghaz Keuoi.
600–800	Tyranny. Real states formed.	Sargon 2600. Naramsin.	Dynasty XI. and XII.	Shubbiliuluma. Shalamaneser.
800–900	Relaxation of form and rise of larger states.	Gudea.	Dynasty XIII., XIV.	Carchemish. Assyria.
900–1100	Rise of Fourth Class, *i.e.*, mob of large towns, "warring states."	Gutæans.	Hyksos Period.	Nineveh. Babylon. Second Assyrian Empire. Medians.
1100–1200	Cæsarism. One authority over whole civilisation.	Coming of Semites.	Dynasty XVIII.	Cyrus.
1200–1400	Empire stage.	Hammurabi.	Dynasty XIX.	Darius.
1400–1600	Close of life of Civilisation. Complete stagnation.	1700 B.C.	1100 B.C.	333 B.C.

Development

Classical.	Arabian.	Indian.	Western.
Achæans.	Chaldæans. Jews.	Aryans.	Franks. Germans.
Agamemnon.	Diocletian. Sassanids.	Punjab. Aryans.	Charlemagne. Capetians.
Odyssey.	Diocletian. Sassanids.	Punjab. Aryans.	Empire and Papacy period.
Ionian Commercial Towns.	Byzantinism.	Seven Cities.	100 Years' War. Wars of Roses.
Tyrants. Democracy. Oligarchy.	Justinian to Haroun Al Raschid.	Kingdoms of Ganges.	New Monarchies. Louis XIV.
Fourth Century. Social Revolution.	Seljuk Turks.	—	Napoleon.
Hellenism.	Rise of Baghdad, Cordoba, etc., as great cities.	—	National Wars. Socialism.
Sulla to Cæsar.	Saladin.	Chandragupta.	A.D. 2000.
Augustus.	Ottoman Turks.	Asoka.	A.D. 2100.
A.D. 200	A.D. 1400.	0	A.D. 2300.

Approximate Period of Years.	Type of Thought.	India.
0–300	Mythological Period.	Aryans. Heroic Epic.
200–600	Age of Faith and Unconscious Belief.	Rig Vedas.
550–750	Age of Renaissance and Reformation. Conscious thought about the Universe.	Upanishads.
600–800	First rational and scientific thought.	Sulva Sutras. Elements of Geometry.
750–900	The Individual Thinker and Systematic Philosophy.	Panini. Kapila. Yoga.
800–900	Rationalism. Return to Nature.	—
900–1100	Materialism. Ways of Life. Humanitarians. Idealists. Scepticism. Socialism. Theosophy and Esoteric Creeds. Pessimism.	— Buddha. Jainism. — — Buddhism. Buddhism. Buddhism.
900–1100		Periods of
1100–1400	Systematisation. Compilation and Stagnation.	Code of Manu.

This table is based on that of Spengler in his "Untergang des
* Periods of a Pseudo Morphosis or influence of a developed

Classical.	Arabia.	Western Europe.
Iliad.	Apocalypses.	Nibelungen.
Theogonies. Cosmogonies.	Neo Platonism.* Trinitarian Controversy.	Scholasticism.*
Ionian. Philosophers. Pythagoras.	Mohammed.	Renaissance. Religious Reform. Luther—Cromwell.
Sophists. Plato.	Djafar.	Bruno. Copernicus. Galileo. Kepler. Descartes. Newton. Pascal.
Plato. Aristotle.	Avicenna.	Berkeley. Kant.
Later. Sophists, etc.	—	Locke. Encyclopædists. Rousseau. Hume—Gibbon.
Pyrrhonists. Epicureans.	Arabian Science. —	Utilitarians. Pragmatists. Positivists.
Stoics.	Averroes.	Shaftesbury.
Cynics.	Algazzil.	T. H. Green.
Sceptics.	—	Criticism.
Stoics.	—	Marx.
Stoicism.	Sufism.	Spiritualism.
Mysteries.	—	Theosophy.
Epicurus.	Omar Khayyam.	Schopenhauer. Hardy.
Scientific Thought and	Applied Science	
Galen. Gaius. Ptolemy.	— — —	— — —

Abendlandes," although there are some important differences.
civilisation on an early one.

in a similar position in other octaves. Spengler's law of civilisation bestows on us, if only we understand it rightly, the same power of prophecy in history. Once it is grasped in its essence, we may trace in the details ourselves and find in the past, dark and fragmentary as it may appear, many of the factors without which any civilisation would be incomplete. We can argue that the future, dark and conjectural though it is, may be expected to repeat certain features, invariably exhibited by the civilisations of which we can survey the total history.

To elaborate and expound, clearly and shortly, and in our own way, this great idea of Spengler, is the ambition of this book. It will attempt to show how the main course of civilisations has run in the past and how, to a limited extent, it may be forecasted in the future. Greatly as we are indebted to Spengler for the main idea, it is not always possible to accept his interpretations, and in some cases we have gone far beyond his account; and, needless to say, the whole form and method are our own. We have, in addition, attempted to lay the greatest stress on the fact that, though environment is obviously important, the higher

manifestations, the forms of art, thought and politics, are not haphazard or dependent wholly on human will or invention, nor on geographical and other conditions, but work themselves out from within by an inner law. In other words, we have tried to indicate the restrictions within which we live. It is possible also that with the additional knowledge of those factors on which the whole of our higher life depends, individuals may be able to help the more successful, because the more necessary, development of themselves within the civilisation. We may hope that in time the whole course of history will be determined by a philosophy, but it is not within either the power or the scope of the historian to write it. We may merely assert that the facts are as we have stated.

CHAPTER II

THE POLITICAL SCHEME

THE civilisations with which we have to deal are eight or nine in number; of some of them we know much, of all we know something, and only of one or two do we know so little that we may neglect them for our purposes. Each rises in a definite geographical area, after a period of "pre-culture" which is similar in all cases and may last for several centuries. Each, after its birth, assumes in essence similar forms, passes from formlessness to the height of form and thence passes again to a formlessness similar in external appearance to that from which it sprang, but lacking its vitalising power. Each, being the expression or realisation of certain potential ideas, feelings or qualities, is not amenable to the intellect pure and simple, which can only judge things from without, but must be looked at in the same way as we look at a work of art, for such things as "height of form" in a civilisation are obviously not to be put clearly into words or

mathematical symbols. The idea which each fulfils—idea in the Greek sense—we may term the general idea, or, better, the fundamental symbol; it is expressed in the political, intellectual or spiritual, and artistic phenomena of the culture, so that the whole life of a higher culture falls into place in relation to the "idea." The period of the civilisation is roughly 1,400 years, though we may, if we will, for safety's sake, put it at 1,600. The civilisations are as follows: (1) The Sumerian Akkadian, extending from 3200-1800 B.C., preceded by the formless stages which we may recognise at Ur, whose date is usually put far too early and is probably not before 3800, and at Kish, whose flourishing period is about 3500. (2) The Egyptian, extending from about 2800-1200 B.C., and preceded by the Thinite period and the first three dynasties. (By analogy with other civilisations we may reject once and for all the absurd chronology of Flinders Petrie and the latest American excavators, who put Dynasty III. back to 4200 B.C., and can accept Meyer's dating, which gives a shorter period for the ages of confusion before the Middle Kingdom and the Theban Empire than the Cambridge Ancient History.) (3) The

Indian in the Punjab area, extending later to the Ganges valley, and finally spreading as far as Ceylon, and beginning about 1500 B.C. Of the earliest period of this we know practically nothing, but, with the key in our hands, we may find the stratification of the heroic epics and the later religious books very much easier, and very much more successfully than has been done by the writers of the Cambridge History of India. The excavation in the Indus valley has recently disclosed a Sumerian extension to India but this has nothing to do with the history of the Indian civilisation. (4) The Chinese in the valley of the Hoang-Ho, about the same time as the Indian and quite independently of it. Of the early period of this we again know practically nothing, but of the later period much; and we may argue back at least as far as 1100 B.C. In many ways the Chinese is very close to our own, but its peculiar quality is an insistence on "good form," which enabled it to continue for many hundred years after all life had gone out of it. (5) The Classical, beginning in the Ægean area about 1200, and in its early stages closely connected with the relics of the Egyptian, so that we have the

overlapping of a youthful civilisation and an old; in Cnossos and Egypt a highly naturalistic art and advanced form of architecture, in Mycenæ the beginnings of a primitive form of art and massive feudal castles. Rome is but the later stage of the classical and not, as we are taught, a parallel to Athens. (6) A doubtful civilisation, doubtful chiefly because of our ignorance of details and the prejudices of archæologists, who try to connect geographical continuity with cultural. It is that which we may perhaps call the Hittite civilisation or the second Babylonian, or better still, the Hittite-Assyrian. It begins about 1800 B.C. at Boghaz-keuoi, in Central Asia Minor, with a regular heroic age, passes through a first empire stage in the days of Shubbiluliuma, shifts its centre to Carchemish (which survived till 800 B.C.), and to Nineveh in the days of Shalmaneser and, finally, after a period of confusion reaches some sort of stability in the Persian Empire of Darius. (7) About the turn of B.C. to A.D. there arise two civilisations in very different parts of the world. First that which Spengler, for lack of a better word, calls rather misleadingly the Arabian. This does not mean that it was centred in Arabia or that the Arabians were its

carriers; but it is the civilisation of which the later forms are known to us from their magnificent manifestations in Arabian learning, architecture and religion. The area of its birth is that which extends from Byzantium to the Tigris, and it is preceded by the apocalyptic religions which developed in that area from 600 B.C. onwards and are, in a way, obscured by the Persian, just as the Mycenean was by the Egyptian, and as the genuine "Arabian" is by the late Roman. This phenomenon Spengler calls a pseudo-morphosis, by which he means that the normal course of a culture is distorted and diverted, because of the existence in that area of another and older culture; ultimately the younger culture will break through with all the more energy and exuberance for having been suppressed. The best example of this is the sudden expansion of the Arabian at the time of Mohammed, when the culture came into its own. Another example will occur during the next centuries in Europe. (8) At about the same time the Central American culture was beginning, after a pre-cultural period of several centuries. It began in Yucatan and the northern districts, shifted to the Maya area, and finally came under the sway of the

Aztec Empire, to fall a sudden and violent victim to the invading Spaniards, who destroyed not only the people but the thousands of documents which would have given us a full history of the period. (9) Lastly, we have the Western civilisation, beginning about A.D. 900, and having at present still 300 or 400 years to run, but repeating quite clearly the course taken by the Roman Empire from 150 B.C. onwards. The Celtic "culture" and the Empire of Charlemagne represent the pre-natal period of this culture. Because of its general idea, which enables it to excel in technical science, we are led to think that it can never die away; but past history teaches us to expect the fossilisation and staticisation of our own as of other cultures, and though we may never argue from a "has been" to a "must be," it may perhaps be of service even to have warned people of what they must expect if things take the "natural" course. It is, however, doubtful if we can do anything to stop that course.

We may perhaps include another culture which has not yet reached the period of its birth, but is clearly foreshadowed: the Russian. The Russian is one of the most interesting examples of pseudo-morphosis. Rightfully,

Russia should have had nothing in common with Western ideas, and indeed a study of genuine Russian novels, customs, and architecture, shows that there is nothing in common. But thanks to the misplaced genius of Peter the Great and the foundation of Petersburg as a western-looking city in place of Moscow, which is the true centre of Russia, for 200 years Russia has been trying to superimpose Western forms of society, of thinking, and of technical science, on a people which should have nothing to do with them. There are clear signs of Russian epics and of the amorphous empire which usually precedes a culture and is the germ from which grows the feudal idea; but with the emancipation of the serfs in 1861 the course of events was still further diverted, and Russia will have to await the arrival of a second genius who will restore Russia to herself, centre her thoughts on the east and south-east instead of the west, and, by encouraging the fixed settlement of the peasants on the land, pave the way for the transformation of the peasant to the feudal system, in the same way as the Roman villa gave place to true feudalism. But that is not yet.

For some reason which remains unexplained

—it may be due to the Atlanteans or to the Children of the Sun, but more probably to neither—the higher culture appears on the earth's surface, and we should not assume that the change was gradual from Strepyan to Azilian, from that through neolithic to eneolithic, and thence to the full metal age. Indeed, we know that Aurignacian or Cro-Magnon man was far superior to his Solutrean and Magdalenian successors. Nor need we look for any missing links. New forms appear suddenly, and though analysis may be able later to give an account, it cannot give the reason of the change. Darwinism in its pure form is losing, and has lost, favour, and scientists are beginning to realise that so far from it being true that "*natura nihil facit per saltum,*" it would be nearer the truth to say "*natura omnia facit per saltum*"; and the leap from lower to higher culture is enormous, especially in proportion to the changes afterwards. It may be that further investigation will show that even among the lower cultures there is some law of cycles, but their forms and fundamental ideas are too little known to us, and the knowledge too little systematised to be of much use. The painting of South Russian

pots, the marriage laws of Central Australian tribes, cannot at present be regarded as relevant to the discussion, and are meaningless for an account of the real origins of culture.

One of the grave errors in all departments of thought is to imagine that we have explained an idea or an art form if we can trace it to its chronological beginnings. Thus Romanesque is supposed to explain Gothic, Eleusinian mysteries prove the unimportance and derivativeness of the Christian; Egyptian myths in England or Cambodian elephants in Maya demonstrate the dependence of all cultures on that of Egypt, whence we have all borrowed or stolen our "cultural capital." But apart from the fact that a "*post hoc*" never proves a "*propter hoc*," we may reply that borrowing in civilisation does not always prove a debt, may indeed prove a curse to the borrower, and further, that a civilisation proves its quality, not only by what it borrows, but by what it fails to borrow : for only so shall we find the reason for the borrowing. European music shows its real greatness because it had no kindred original from which to copy; Greek sculpture, on the other hand, was shackled for a considerable time by the orientalising subjects which were

forced upon its attention. Nabonidus would have had far more chance of producing something original if he had not been so tied down by the prayers and liver omens of Sargon and Hammurabi.

All this is heresy to many of our most learned critics, but the history of civilisation will never be understood until we rid ourselves of the delusions of nineteenth century thinking. To borrow is, maybe, often to help oneself, but the thing borrowed must be kept alive and assimilated. If we must tie ourselves down to ethnological or geographical sequences, so that we write a book on Rome from 1000 B.C. to A.D. 1925, or of Europe from 5000 B.C. to to-day, let us realise that the ethnological questions in themselves are meaningless, and do not help an atom towards the solving of cultural questions. It is not race, not even the Nordic race, that counts, but the creative influence of a civilisation. Thus a history of Rome should be clearly divided into three sections; we should show how it became part of the classical civilisation about 500 B.C. and immediately assumed the political form that was suited to that period, *i.e.*, a tyranny, how it gradually became the only centre, because of its unique

invention of the tribunate and the failure of the Hellenistic powers to back Hannibal in maintaining the balance of power, how it then developed to its finale in about A.D. 200, having passed through the stages of Cæsarism and Imperialism; how it then stagnated and suffered from internal decay so that it fell an easy victim to the invaders, how the invaders themselves for some time were as historically unimportant as the pre-Etruscan inhabitants until Rome passed under the influence of the Eastern Empire, and the papacy became in essence nothing but a caliphate, how the fame of the city attracted men to Rome so that Augustine wrote in Latin and Plotinus in Greek, though both are absolutely unclassical in feeling and idea, and express purely "Arabian" ideas of world and God, even though under names different from those employed by other Arabians, how any one of importance, whether political, intellectual or artistic, though he lived in Rome and had Roman names, could only attain importance by becoming receptive to "Arabian" civilisation; how, finally, Rome became part of Western civilisation in about A.D. 800, and the Popes of that and the next centuries were nothing but feudal lords, how in the twelfth

century the purely Western idea of the papacy conquered and became a spiritual idea which decayed again in the fourteenth, because of the insane desire of Hildebrand to establish a universal papal feudalism, how the papacy shared in the struggles between king and nobles, itself taking one side or the other, how it lost its influence over a large part of Europe at the Reformation, how Rome became of little importance except as an object of invaders from the time of Charles V. to that of Napoleon III., and finally has taken its place again in the political development of Western civilisation and thought, with Mazzini, Mussolini, Croce and D'Annunzio. We may and should show how the tradition of the city worked psychologically and trace the effect of the Holy Roman Empire upon the normal course of events, whereby a twist was given to the history of Western Europe; but that is secondary, not primary.

With this warning we may pass at once to the political development of a civilisation and give it first in broadest outline. We must realise again that the period is 1,400 years, and that each district which becomes a part of the civilisation must take up with it in the form

which the whole has reached at the moment. Each part does not, as is usually assumed, go through an independent course, the result of external events, and we have therefore a good test for the real connection of a district with a civilisation in its almost immediate assumption of the form proper to the whole. In outline, then, the political development is as follows: the variations are due chiefly to the variations of the fundamental symbols. After a period of some centuries, during which the two classes of priest and noble, together with the incoherent class of peasants, are crystallising, the civilisation proper begins with a feudal age. For feudalism is not a specifically European thing, it occurs in all cultures that we can trace, and at the same period; a deeper understanding of the impulses which lie at the bottom of all life shows that feudalism of some sort is necessary. After about 200-300 years, and overlapping feudalism to some extent, comes the rise of pure aristocracy, coupled with a kind of nationalism: the king surviving with weakened powers, sometimes to rise again, sometimes to vanish entirely. During a further 200 years the aristocracy gives place to oligarchy, and about 500 years after the beginning the true

nobility decays. With their decay, the "plebs"—those that have filled up the state till now—begin to be of political importance, and it is on them that the power of the new ruler is based. Within the next century the form of the political organisation is at its highest, and for a brief period there is a perfection such as can be only felt, not described; it is the same perfection which one can feel in a fugue of Bach. But perfection cannot last, and as the strictness of form relaxes, the power of the people increases, and ultimately the "*tiers état*" becomes identical with the nation; the nation itself does not last long as the form of government, and with the growth of the fourth class has to give way to an epoch of disorder and confusion, where at first there is some apparent progress towards real democracy, but the people are later used by the great men simply for their own ends. Such forms of power we call Cæsarian, and they represent the complete falling to pieces of all the old constitution and political wisdom, until as the last stage of all an empire arises which attracts round it all that is left of political experience and capacity, whether in the nobles or the people. As a result of the emperor management,

there is an increasing tendency to rigid classification of position and function, and with it to material prosperity based on successful adaptation to environment. After another 200 years the last spark of vitality is gone and the civilisation sinks back into the form from which it arose, semi-feudal, amorphous, but dead, capable at the best only of keeping going for an indefinite period by *vis inertiæ*.

Put thus shortly and simply, the thing seems obvious enough and would hardly justify much pother; but we cannot be content with the bare statement nor allow it to be believed that the changes are due to external causes, even to economic. The changes are as much part of the inner being of the civilisation as a flower is part of the plant. A rose depends for its flower on a multitude of conditions which may retard or encourage its appearance, but the rose itself, in old faculty-psychology language, is the result of "rosiness." To insist on this, to isolate the law from the other qualities, is the task before us and the merit of Spengler.

We have to admit then—and why fuss about the admission?—that we are not entirely free beings, that according to the epoch in

which we are born will be our capacities and our ambitions (if we have any), that we are to some extent puppets in the hands of something beyond and above us, whether we call it Fate or the Immanent Intent; this even the greatest have felt, assuming that something other than they was working in and through them. What we have to do is to accept these limitations and do our best within those bounds; we have, however, also to realise that our age is not the crest of an ascending hill, and that for their period the credulity of the VI. Dynasty, Egyptian, or the utilitarianism of the Republican Roman were as valuable and as important as our own enlightenment or skill. The absolute standards are not part of the civilisations as such, and though a metaphysic may have to discuss them and arrange them according to their values, we have not yet got to the stage of writing a metaphysic; nor do eternal verities hold outside mathematics and kindred intellectualising. All ideas that matter, all feelings that have vitality, all truths, even when apparently eternal, are relative only to their period and must be judged as such. Homer's standards are not ours, Arabian doctors were not troubled by the same questions as Hippocrates,

the principles of Thomas à Becket were far other than those of J. A. Froude.

Before we treat of the political scheme in detail, we must unfortunately go still further back. In the pre-cultural period which extends for a considerable time, and may or may not be associated with the invasion of foreign tribes, the whole area is in a state of flux, not merely because war is frequent—it is often the reverse—but because the great ordering forces of the civilisation are not yet fully at work. There may be considerable achievements at these times; in sculpture as in II. Dynasty Egypt, in Celtic illumination, in Mycenean gold work, in Babylonian politics at Kish or in Arabian apocalyptic in Judea. Historically the period is one of crystallisation, during which the two great orders which are rooted in every civilisation acquire full vitality. Every one knows that non-cultural peoples consider of importance only nobles and priests; the rest count only so far as they come into relation with the two orders. During the period we are considering, the crucial question is decided whether they can be developed into real natural orders, and so become the bearers of an early vital civilisation, or whether they are to

remain uncoordinated, and so only capable of taking part in the later stages when the culture is breaking away from the soil in which it grew up. These two classes we know to-day as men of action and men of thought, as extroverts and introverts, and they are still the only men who matter for the wider issues; at the earlier stage they are part and parcel of a deeper evolution and represent two distinct and fundamental tendencies.

The nobles gather round the king or chief, for all early groups must have a clearly defined leader if they are to achieve anything, and a condition of semi-feudalism arises, not yet so much in the organisation of the country as in the growth of a class of officials, who are specially conspicuous in Egypt, the Byzantine Empire and the Frankish kingdoms. The details depend, as always, on the fundamental symbol of the culture. The priesthood takes a more varied form; in the position obtained by the priesthood is expressed the religious attitude of the civilisation, for in each area the religion is similar, but distinct from that of any other area. Roman religion has the same basic feeling as Greek, Babylonian as Sumerian, Wesleyanism as Catholicism. Everywhere there is

a struggle between the two orders, with widely differing results. In India the priests practically obliterate the nobles, and the nobles survive only as a sort of priesthood; in China the strong feeling of the nobles prevailed so completely that it is only recently we have discovered that there was a clear priesthood in an early period; in Greece the priests were unimportant except as state and city officials; in Arabia the priest and noble were merged in one, in the idea of Caliph; in Western Europe the priest and noble were equal.

During the period there arises an empire, incoherent and ill-organised, but sufficiently active to exhibit the area which the culture is to express, and where it is likely to begin. The barriers of the orders are becoming fixed, and all men who matter are *ipso facto* members of one of the two, and ultimately the orders become hereditary and exclusive. Once a culture has reached this stage, it seems impossible to annihilate it except by blotting it out by physical violence and keeping the area desolate; in Russia, where the orders were artificial, the nobility has collapsed for the time being, but there is little chance of the Russian Culture being stifled, for a new order will arise in close

contact with the land and ready to lead the way. The instances which occur at once to the mind of such early Empires are Charlemagne, Menes, Agamemnon (in the earlier form), Peter the Great, and the early Sumerian rulers of Kish.

The first glimmer of what is to come has appeared, but it is often a considerable time before the pure spirit of the civilisation appears and spreads abroad. The III. Dynasty in Egypt, with its step pyramids and more typical Egyptian architecture, as opposed to the pre-dynastic age, heralds the way for the pure pyramid and passage tomb, which are the most important symbols of Nilotic art; the same is true of all areas of which we have knowledge. The political aspect appears in the organisation of the nobles, or barons, as we may now call them, from their most famous example. Their existence is closely bound up with the land, they fulfil their function easily and unconsciously, living in their castles which are their all. Their king is the first among his peers, but the relation between him and his followers is, in normal circumstances, close and binding, and self-understood. But the nobles, being an order among themselves, have a tradition of

loyalty, a claim which is also self-understood. All the raids and minor wars of the feudal period serve the double purpose of satisfying the possessive instinct and of bringing the nobles as an order into "form." The priesthood exists by their side as an independent order, sometimes equal, sometimes not; the rest of the country is in a state of serfdom—whether clear-cut as in Western villeinage, or more doubtful as in the form of which Spartan Helotry was the survival, does not matter. The most startling instance of the inevitable rise of this feudalism is in the Eastern Roman Empire, where, by the arrangements of Diocletian, the elaborate imperial civil service became hereditary, service in the army became obligatory, and the great nobles fought with armies of personal followers; more significant, the old classical slavery died out and the slaves were replaced by the "*coloni glebæ ascripti,*" and this by A.D. 300, and at corresponding periods in other civilisations.

In the conflict between the loyalty of the nobles to their order and to their chief, it was the order that won. Within 300 years of the beginnings the nobles everywhere are weakening the power of the kings, to such an extent

that the period is often one of the utmost confusion. Even in feudal times, when the organisation had been most rigid, it had been the nobles who really counted; service was regularised, but the Oath of Salisbury (in the traditional sense) was the exception. In Europe, the effort of the Pope and the Emperor to institute universal feudalism failed, and with the failure both powers ceased for some time to count. So the height and decline of feudalism overlap, as we can see in the Iliad and Odyssey. Odysseus is king only on sufferance in Ithaca, John in England, the VI. Dynasty in Egypt. The nobles claim and obtain independence, and force the king to do their will. But no sooner do they achieve their object than they themselves are superseded; the state as a state, and not merely a conglomeration of orders, is too much for them, they fail to realise that the state is an entity beyond themselves. Their success against the king led to violence and insolence, and we have the classic instance of such periods in the Wars of the Roses in England. But this is not an isolated instance; we find it not only in Europe, in the Empire, in France, among Guelphs and Ghibellines, but also in Egypt in the period of Dynasties VI.-VIII.,

in China, in the oligarchies of Asia Minor and Greece, in the Eastern Roman Empire.

Out of the chaos of these times there sprang to birth, not full-grown but amid much travail, the national state, national in a wide geographical sense in Europe, in the city state in Greece and Italy, in the religious community in Arabia, in the worshippers of Ra in Egypt. There is an inevitable tendency to unification, on a small or large scale, and usually towards monarchy. At the beginning we have a weak monarchy, then a period of confusion, then the king, or his substitute, as representative of the state on a higher level. If a state is to flourish, it must imitate the instinctive habit of the herd, find its symbol in a leader and follow him. So we have Henry VII. and Charles V., annual archons and dictators with vast powers and opposed to the nobles as an order. During the transition the nobles fight for the last time as an order and for the tradition which to the nobles is all-important; but they are defeated and replaced by a state in which the orders are nothing more than social differences.

To the nobles, cities are something alien. The principles on which men live there, the standards they live by, are not part of a tradi-

tion, they are "mean." But the growth of cities is inevitable; in early times they are but a market for the exchange of goods, possibly a religious centre, they attract the craftsmen who form in themselves a sort of order, out of which comes the "third class" or "*tiers état*," a class quite different from the natural orders, but destined at last to overcome and destroy them. The cities are used to oppose the old nobility, and the new nobility stands in absolute contrast to it. For the first time the cities are of primal importance in politics, and if the nobles wish to survive, they must use the towns for their own purposes; and the tragedy for them lies in the fact that by so using them they condemn themselves to political sterility or else, as in Rome, to complete identification with their enemy. As soon as the nobles become liberal they are doomed.

At this point we have the first introduction of the people to politics. The communes had been useful before in the violent conflicts preceding the growth of the national State, henceforward they are the centre of interest. The recognition of the people as of political value by the rulers, whether tyrants, as in Greece and Rome, or kings in Europe (1500 A.D.-1650

A.D.), in Sumer (2600 B.C.-2500 B.C.), or in Egypt (1950 B.C.-1800 B.C.), resulted of necessity, first in the organisation of the State to its highest form and ideal, and second in the use of the power by the "people" to make themselves into the State. The civilisation as it grows leaves the land and takes to the cities; the nobles, in self-defence, form themselves into a political party to oppose the city parties, but in practically all cases—England and Rome are the two most famous exceptions—they fail. Rome is the most amazing instance of the founding of a new tradition just at the time when the tendency was in the direction of absolute democracy, *i.e.*, in 471 B.C. with the firm establishment of the tribunate. In Sumer the period coincides with that of Gudea and his predecessors; in Gudea we have the end of a period, just before the "eighteenth century" begins. In Egypt, Sesostris III. defeated the nobles and raised the kingly power to its highest point. In Europe the period is ushered in by Henry VII., but it is not till the time of Richelieu and Wallenstein, that we have its prime.

When we talk of absolutism we do not mean, as any student of French history will

realise, that the power of the king was absolute or that it extended to every corner; it is rather that the highest potentiality of the civilisation is fulfilled, and that we can only understand if we have understood the general idea of the civilisation. That is why we can say, without fear of appearing ridiculous, that Athenian democracy is parallel to Louis XIV.; for classical constitutions were most perfectly expressed in the annual offices, unique in history, in the full organisation of the city state; and it is obvious that Athens was no democracy in the nineteenth century sense.

As in feudal times there was overlap of the noble state, so in the absolute state there is overlap of that new era of the people. The conditions of fourth century Athens foreshadow clearly the period of confusion in Greece, and the infection of Locke—contrast his views with Hobbes — weakened even French absolutism. Gudea paved the way for the two centuries of disturbance which preceded Hammurabi. The "*aufklärung,*" which occurs in all civilisations at the same time, is really a period of decline; "reason" is the only test of value and the "rights of man" are kept prominently in the foreground. The

old instinctive and traditional symbols, such as survived even to our own day in the best of the "Junker" tradition, are displaced by intellectual ideas. In place of the king, Rousseau; in place of the nobles' loyalty, the power of money; the new influences of theoretical ideas and of business are in a way the successors of the old orders, priest and noble. It is easy to trace the descent from the priest to the philosopher and scientist, from the worship of God to the worship of intellectual ideas and physical concepts; and the relation of the practically minded merchant-king to the noble is equally close. From now on, ideas are used by the men of action for their own purposes and they achieve their aims by the use of money. Public opinion, and its manipulation, concentrate all attention on themselves; intercourse is easier in the towns and the circulation of books or newspapers leads to a consciousness among the mob of their own power and the desire to use it. But as the mob cannot accomplish anything constructive by itself, it falls at once under the sway of any one who has the skill to manage it; at times of a Marius, at times of a Cæsar or a Lenin, for none of these was really democratic, and two at least depended on cash

for their achievements. Cæsar appeared just when Rome was ripe for him and when there was some chance of constructive work, based on his own personality and ability to restrain the people; Lenin tried to introduce a phenomenon of a later civilisation into one that had hardly yet been born, and all he could achieve was to smash all that he found, though his financial resources enabled him to hold dictatorial power even until his death; but future historians may be relied on to compare Lenin and Robespierre, whereas the real comparison should be between Lenin and Marius. Unfortunately, the internal history of most civilisations is dark at this time; of Egypt we know nothing, of Sumer nothing, but of China and India there is much to be known, if only the sources were properly treated and published, for Se-ma-tsien has fairly full accounts of the time and the Buddhistic books contain many reflections of the political life of the time from Buddha himself to Asoka. Arabia is less obscure, and the break-up of the kingdom of Haroun-al-Raschid, together with the decline during the romantic age of Omar Khayyam is clear proof of the change. It is the period of the nineteenth century, one of the most im-

portant from any standpoint, certainly to us, who are just passing from it and beginning to realise how many were its mistakes. It is an age which ends in scepticism and negativism, and all the hopes which were aroused by the advance of thinking and of liberty doomed to disappointment. If we look at a list of its great men, we find that they are no longer men of action, no longer the nobles; they are thinkers and often dilettanti. The great statesmen of the period, Bismarck and Palmerston, are not popular with us, for we treat all questions as children of the "*aufklärung*," and cannot help, if we are intelligent, taking the Liberal side in politics. There is to-day a tendency backwards, which will gradually restore to the "Conservative" party a certain number of men of ability. Winston Churchill may perhaps be regarded as the first of them in England, just as Lloyd George may be regarded as the first example of the opposite tendency of Liberals to go "Cæsarian." Even at their best times, the Liberals, seeing too much, do little but encourage the fatuities of Cleomenes of Sparta in classical times, or the vacillations of Gladstone and the 1848 Revolutions in Western Europe. Yet they cannot be side-

tracked or disregarded, for they are, for a time, the most important influence, and if they can strike up an alliance with finance and business, they may, for a time, predominate. The Manchester school which called itself political was as keen on liberty to make money as on political liberty.

These internal changes are due to the French Revolution, or whatever corresponds to it elsewhere. The external events, which accompany them, represent the period of the "warring States," as Spengler calls it after the Chinese; of this political, rather than the economic aspect we know more. We ourselves are more than half way through it, for it began with Napoleon and with the spread of the Revolution ideas and the rise of our modern "nations." The classical world entered on the period about 300 B.C., after the death of Alexander and the defeat of the Samnites by Rome; Egypt, Syria and Asia Minor still wear the appearance of kingdoms, chiefly because the old traditions of the earlier civilisations survived and so thwarted the normal development; in any case, the Ptolemies and Seleucids were kings of a very different sort from those of 600 years before. In the Egyptian civilisation the

period is known as that of the Hyksos, who were invaders from the north but who themselves became part of the Egyptian culture, as later many of the Roman Empire invaders became part of the "Arabian" culture. The government during the time was not merely that of usurpers, it was one of men who themselves came under the influence of the civilisation, whether noble, people, parvenu or alien. In China the period is called by its own historians that of the "warring States." In Arabia there was a rapid succession of changes from Persia to Constantinople, and even to Spain. It is a time of great individuals, who cannot form a great tradition as did the nobles, but who act on the opportunities as they arise in a manner that is little noble, in any sense. They may be men of education, or men of the people, "*terræ filii*"; they may be brought to the surface by military success or by a capacity for organising. In most cases there is some theory to back them, which they either use to raise themselves, *e.g.*, Lenin, or which they actually believe in, *e.g.*, Tiberius Gracchus; and, as we have said, the figure of finance is never far away.

It is not hard, therefore, to see in outline to

what we are ourselves advancing. The world is beginning to centre round a few men in each country who control its destinies, though ultimately they may be dependent upon the people and the Labour Party. If England retains financial control of the world, if the trade unions do not smash her economically by insisting on an impossible standard of life or of population, it may be England that should finally produce the emperor; if England fails, the choice lies between Germany and America. Self-determination of peoples, independence, nationalism, are slogans which are valuable for a time as ideals, but they give place to others and cease to carry conviction; then come our Cæsar and Augustus, who restore unity and peace, not the armed peace of the nineteenth century, but a peace that is real and full, based not on politics or modern economics, but on the final effort of all that is capable and valuable.

It is idle to prophesy, especially to a civilisation that thinks so highly of itself as does ours. It may be that we can save ourselves, but not by our technical achievements nor by our science. Salvation will come, if at all, from the restoration of the old tradition or the nearest

we can approach to it, substituting for Eton and Harrow the Grammar Schools of the big towns; no thought-out system can work in politics, for none is elastic enough to adapt itself to the needs of the moment. We are lucky in living at a time when we may restore the tradition and prepare the way for something that is "valuable" by concentrating on that need, and helping even the apparently selfish who are trying to get the State back into form. In England the task is difficult because the Communists have no great men among them, the Socialists are, like the Liberals, too insistent on system; the Conservatives are hampered by the lack of inspiration and enthusiasm, and there is little likelihood of the establishment of a military dictatorship, as is so common in France. But the time has barely come for a really successful man and we must hope for rescue from a Lloyd George or a Churchill on a larger and greater scale. Such men give little time to thinking—too little, to be frank, on some subjects—and avoid the fatal mistake that has been made so often before, by the Stoics in Greece, the Buddhist epigoni in India, the Bagdad schools in Arabia, all of which tried their hand and failed. India, an apparent ex-

ception, was centred so wholly on the religious side of life that the struggles and solution could come only from what we in our blindness regard as a religion parallel to Christianity, but what is really as much a philosophy as Stoicism or Socialism. All the thinkers seem to themselves to be working out a solution; all that they achieve is to rouse the population of the big cities—in our case, the natives of overseas colonies as well—to a state of morbid excitement and activity, so that they are all the more readily at the disposal of any one who can use them. Those who achieve anything in politics at this period must base themselves on the people (in classical times the slaves or allies), they must think of the people and individual liberty, and carry them as banners before them. But if they are to be believed, they must be properly understood also. All his honesty and sincerity could not save Tiberius Gracchus when he interfered in a sphere beyond him. However much the fourth class may imagine that Socialism or Communism will do for them, they will find, in the end, even if they are unhappy enough to carry out the pure gospel of Marx or Lenin, that their leaders are as autocratic and unreasonable as

their old enemies the capitalists. They will always have to endure the "tyranny of liberty against despotism."

But the powers of both the people and finance, of the thinkers and the big business men, which originated in the nineteenth century, find a change is being rung in by the twenty-first, and little by little they, too, lose their position before the attacks of the new purely political power of the Empire. The Empire is the final shape taken by a civilisation before its return to the semi-feudal condition from which it arose. The Cæsars attract to themselves all that is of practical ability; the philosophers become the opposition, at Rome the Stoics, in China the Confucians, in Europe the Socialists; vast fortunes continue to be made, but it is not the wealthy who control the destinies of the State by reason of their wealth, however much it may be necessary for Darius or Rameses to possess it. Money making becomes a sort of dilettante occupation for those who are unable to serve in politics, while the political history of the time is centred in the immediate entourage of the ruler. In any case, the story of the pacification of the various worlds, the organisation of vast military de-

fences and communications, the elaborate systems of commerce and transport, careful taxation however carried out, considerable material prosperity side by side with oppression by the imperial power—all this we can find in other civilisations, all this we may look forward to in our own.

CHAPTER III

GENERAL IDEAS

To the most casual observer there are today a great number of differing aspects of various parts of the globe. No one with the smallest knowledge of architecture would mistake an Egyptian temple for a Saracenic mosque or a Byzantine church for a Gothic cathedral. Usually some attempt is made to explain architectural differences by reference to building materials or models and any other obvious physical factor which may occur to the mind. But obvious as are the different types of architecture, they are nothing like as striking as differing types of thought. In spite of the Europeanisation of practically the whole world, the existence of means of communication, from railways to wireless telegraphy, one-half of the world has not the remotest idea what the other half is thinking, and could not understand it if it had, as any Anglo-Indian will tell us. The basic ideas of the Western European, those axioms on which he thinks and

acts, are not accepted outside the European area and centre of civilisation. In the same way the relics of past civilisations have their own basic ideas, and the resulting ideas and thoughts are often almost incomprehensible to the ordinary member of another civilisation. It is only with difficulty that a student of one civilisation can understand the attitude of another. Each has in fact an attitude of thinking, of feeling, almost of soul, which is peculiarly its own, and which, though intangible and indescribable, is nevertheless so real that it gives an individual turn to every branch of human activity. Its art, thought, architecture, religion, politics, owe peculiarities in their development to this fundamental idea, whatever it may be, and render any understanding of its peculiar movements impossible, unless this basic idea is understood.

Buckle's ideas on civilisation have long been discarded. Climatic and other environmental conditions will not account for much in the activities of mankind. Important they may be, but unless they are overwhelming, as they seem to have been at times in Central America, the spirit of the civilisation is far stronger than they. The legend that the races of the North

are more vigorous than those of the South could only have been put forward by an historian whose vision was limited to our own epoch. In the sixteenth century Spain and Italy were at least as active as England and France; in the eleventh century there was more civilised life on the south coasts of the Mediterranean than on the north. From the apex of our own culture we look down on the rest of humanity, forgetful of the fact that 100 years ago we had not comprehended the political thought of Aristotle, and had only recently secured as good communications as those of the early Roman Empire.

A more recent but equally foolish idea is that civilisation has some connection with, and its variations are dependent upon, the characteristics of certain definite races. In Western Europe there are traceable a Nordic, an Alpine and a Mediterranean type, and the superiority of various parts is supposed to be due to the qualities of the Nordic race. No such idea is worthy of serious consideration. As an intellectual movement the Renaissance is without parallel in its importance to Western Europe and its chief home was Italy, but since the sixteenth century Italy has been relatively sterile

in ideas. Spain and Portugal led every one else in the adventurous spirit which enabled Europe to extend its activities around the globe, but since the sixteenth century the centre of civilisation has moved and they have become almost wholly unimportant. It is too much to assume that all these nations were once urged on by an influx of Nordics. Nor can any racial theory account for the movement of other civilisations. The astonishing progress of India was followed by complete stagnation without the slightest indication of racial change; and the civilisation of the Euphrates valley at the time of Hammurabi included Sumerians, Semites and Elamites—the last-named being of unknown linguistic type and possibly negroid in feature. The various constituents differ from one another, but the spirit of the civilisation included them all, and everything that matters in art and thought and politics is comprehensible over the whole area of the civilisation.

Western Europe with its unparalleled record of scientific achievement has some excuse for looking down on the other civilisations as so many partial successes in the struggle upwards from barbarism to culture. We are, however, so constantly reminded that steamships and

wireless and poison-gas are insufficient evidence of superiority, that it is only necessary to add that the accumulated knowledge and generalisations, which make up scientific thought, do not result in anything to make the understanding of the universe much easier, or even to make rational action more probable.

The case for the European in the struggle against the Aryan is simply non-existent. A jury of twelve Europeans would decide in his favour, it is true, simply because they could understand his attitude, but a jury of twelve Aryans would give the opposite verdict. In the same way, the contrast between the only living culture of our own day, the Russian, and ourselves is complete, in thought and outlook. Not only does Western Europe not think like Russia, but it never has done so, and in spite of the pseudo-morphosis by which railways and bureaucracy and Communism have apparently dominated the country, the Russian soul is beyond the conception of the average European. Tolstoy, who is a Russian, is also a Westerner by accident; no one except a true Russian could have written "The Idiot" or the "Brothers Karamazov." At the bottom of his soul the Russian feels the words, "The

evil that I would not, that I do," and the typical novel repeats over and over again the inner conflict felt by the growing soul, but in a form which should be alien to it. In this country, a typically sane and active Babbitt would appear an inexplicably cheerful lunatic, just as the introspective attitude of Dmitri Pavlovitch appears to us more fitted for an asylum than for the world of affairs. Spiritual conflict is the fundamental idea of the Russian, a spiritual conflict which the Westerner does not feel and cannot understand.

A somewhat similar contrast would have been seen in the classical world. To the Greek the world was essentially real and concrete, and even the negation of the body in the Orphic beliefs had something real which is not to be found in India. Relatively similar to our attitude was his conception of the value of this world and the unimportance of any other; but beyond this his temples and his city, his science, his sculpture, have in them a stability, a "staticness," which is the reflection of a mental attitude towards life which we cannot feel. The Greek wanted a state which could be nearer to him than the abstract national idea to which the European can offer his allegiance. Eng-

land is England to the Wessex peasant who knows nothing of London or the industrial north, but Athens was Athens only to a man who could look down from the Acropolis and see before him what his country meant. Even Aristotle could not envisage anything more than a city state; and with the coming of the greater power of Macedon, all real political life left Greece, never to return. Even the Roman Empire was organised and conceived on a sort of city state basis.

Equally in religion, the Greek gods were as definite as the human beings whose passions and pleasures they shared. Whatever may have been the origin of the names, even of the functions, of these beings, the Greek owed very little in his conception of them to any one else. A race of conquering chieftains, of divine buccaneers, they are only secondarily the personification of natural forces, and primarily men and women like the early Greeks themselves. When the time came for them to go, there was nothing left for the Greek to seize hold of. On the one hand he went off to philosophy, and on the other to the crude superstitions and rites of the mysteries; while in conservative Rome there was nothing but a

formal ritual retained in the same sort of way as morning prayers are kept up in a school.

In contrast to this attitude, and somewhat akin to that of the Russian, was the Indian. The Greek found it incomprehensible, even when he borrowed some of its tenets for his philosophy. For the whole mind of the Hindu was based on the idea of the unpleasantness of life and on a desire to escape from it. We know little or nothing of Hindu building until the rock-hewn Buddhist temples with their over-ornamentation make their appearance and portend the decline of the civilisation; little or nothing is known of the political history until the time of the shifting of the centre from the Punjab to the Ganges and the rise of the great towns; indeed, to the time of Chandragupta and Asoka. But the religious and philosophical history is singularly full, and religion and philosophy combine to give the fullest expression to Hindu feeling. On the one hand the Hindu was conscious of God, on the other hand he was conscious of himself, and his greatest efforts were directed towards a harmony between the two. The gods, at first a personification of nature and natural forces in their most sublime and mysterious manifes-

tation, become in the Upanishads the one spirit. "All this is one Brahman. Let a man meditate on that visible world as beginning and breathing in the Brahman." But even in the Upanishads, the Hindu is conscious of a want of harmony in connection with humanity. Existence apart from the universal spirit is unhappiness, and the object of man is to escape from this existence. The whole spirit of the Hindu was bound up in the conception of the law by which escape was possible and harmony might be restored. The philosophy of Kapila had as its object the relief of man from the three kinds of pain—bodily and mental, natural and extrinsic, divine and supernatural; and complete emancipation could be obtained only by the knowledge of the law of human existence. Pantajali's Yoga had a similar idea, and Buddhism is essentially a way based on a law. The basis of the Indian attitude is found in the words Dharma and Karma, "the way and the law." With their eyes fixed on a universal law or power or way beyond the evidence of the senses, it is not surprising that by itself Hinduism produced next to nothing in the way of art; and its great achievements, outside its religious philosophy, lay in logic and the science

of number. Logic, necessary for philosophy, and numbers with their mysterious inevitability, were but side issues, yet at the same time the only practical or semi-practical manifestations possible for those who looked for a law and a way for the human spirit.

Like ourselves the Greek looked for no law and no way, in the manner of the Indian. Such laws as he discovered were the result rather of his critical intelligence working on the facts of the world. His ideal was beauty of form. He expressed his ideal in concrete shape in statues and temples, and in a higher but still concrete life. If Buddha preached a middle way to escape from life, the Greek preached temperance as the most beautiful form of life. If the Hindu looked for a future state of relative unconsciousness as a respite from the sorrows of the world, the only future life for the Greek was in a kingdom of shades which was utterly unpleasant, because unreal. The Hindu found the highest expression of his mind in a law, but the Greek used the conception of Theos as a kind of abstract force working for the ideal beauty of the world. Typical of the Greek is his achievement in geometry, which of all sciences is that which can be called

concrete, limited and yet beautiful. To sum up the Greek "idea" is impossible, yet the words "concrete beauty" as the ideal and "concrete form" as the average Greek feeling are not far from the truth. If Plato can escape from the concrete at times, the average man was nearer to Aristotle's Politics than to Plato's Republic. There were not to be found far horizons among the Greeks, and the idea of infinity was almost unknown; so terrifying was the idea of eternity that the same word means both eternal and appalling.

There is little evidence for the fundamental idea of the Mesopotamian civilisation with its weird ziggurats, and little for the Hittite-Assyrian. Egyptian feeling was undoubtedly based on a way, but a way that was very different from that of the Indian. It was a way into the future life as definite as the life of the Egyptian in this world—and almost as material. But the way was to be found not by thought, but by some distinct knowledge that was more or less accessible to all. The whole directedness of Egyptian life is expressed in its pyramids and temples: the secrecy and yet the solidity of the pyramid and the rigid formalism of temple reliefs and paintings.

The Arabian attitude, on the other hand, difficult as it may be to put into words, is quite distinct from the others and comparatively easy to grasp. Arabian life had three characteristics: it was real in the present, it was definite in the future and it was magical. The first characteristic is in a way subordinate to the others, so that at times it seems as if the Arabian might deny the validity of the present life. But in his feeling for reality the Arabian was somewhat akin to the Greek; his feeling, however, stretches further and includes more than did that of the Greek. Beyond the real life of the present he is conscious of the real life of the future, which instead of being merely a kingdom of the shades was far more definite than this. In addition he is conscious of a God, and it is this God which especially distinguishes the civilisation from the rest. The idea is present before the culture has developed all over the "Arabian" area where, for centuries before Christ, there were a number of tribal communities and small racial states, all distinguished by the belief in one God. When Christianity displaced these creeds, the attitude of mind persisted. Not only were the Jews and the Ebionites and Nazarenes definitely unitarian,

but even the Nestorian Church, much the most powerful in these areas, east of the Roman Empire, was less tritheistic than the rest. With the exception of the Jews all these sects went over to Mohammedanism *en bloc,* and the differences between the Christian and other sects vanished. Everywhere God was left predominant; the Mohammedan visualised his God as a being definite and personal and as unaccountable in his actions as a man. He is above the reason and the intelligence, neither does he condescend to explain his actions or his commands or his universe. It is for him to speak and for human beings to obey. Equally unaccountable, but equally important for the Arabian feeling, is the collection of angels, djinns, demons and fairies with which the universe is peopled—remarkable creatures who will serve the possessor of a lucky ring until he happens to speak the wrong word. All this produces the atmosphere of powerful and mysterious forces which give the Arabian civilisation its peculiarly magical quality and such wonders as the "Arabian Nights." Magical, too, is the typical Saracen mosque with its peculiar arch and its elaborate ornamentation; yet at the same time there is little mystery here.

God does not move in a mysterious way, however unintelligible he may be. His acts are as much part of ordinary nature as are those of Haroun-al-Raschid, and are inexplicable chiefly because no one can explain the obvious. The mosque does not express a religious feeling nearly as deeply as does the cathedral with its long aisles, nor does the minaret express the soaring aspiration of the spire. The mosque and minaret together indicate knowledge, clear and beyond dispute, the feeling of understanding with which we might regard one who is like ourselves though without our obvious weaknesses, the respect which we might feel towards vast power used without petty malice.

To the Arabian mind the triumphs of Greek thought were only partially satisfactory. Greek political struggles and thought were meaningless to one who was prepared to die for his faith but not for his country. Aristotle's logic he could assimilate, but Aristotle's politics belonged to another sphere altogether. Geometry he could understand, but he could never have created. On the other hand, where the Greek never got beyond concrete number, the Arabian could conceive the figure O and

could build up a science of algebra on the magical x. Still further, he could develop the sciences of astronomy and medicine, both at first half magical and half exact. The purely concrete, sculpture, painting, that which merely belongs to this world and can be perfectly appreciated by the senses and intelligence, all in fact which makes Greece glorious, appears unsatisfactory to him. Somewhere underlying everything which the Arabian felt and did was a sentiment of faith, a demand on an unaccountable god from an unaccountable man, something which is both definite and magical.

Western European civilisation derives a vast amount of its art and thought from Græco-Roman and Arabian culture. This is true in the case of each of those young cultures which have come into contact with older ones, but it is only superficially important. Whatever forms are taken over are never adopted without alteration, and the fundamental idea alchemises them into something which, however similar in outward appearance, is different in spirit. Western Europe appreciates ideas which are concrete like those of Greece; it has assimilated the magical definiteness of Arabia, but the course of development would not have

been enormously different in its essence even if the civilisation had started *in vacuo*. Its fundamental idea working on the organism of its culture would have produced a result which to a discerning eye would have been very much the same. In the Middle Ages religion was superficially the legacy of Arabia, and the Empire and Papacy came partly from Rome and partly from Arabia; when the Renaissance came, it appeared to be Greek. But beneath both religion and government lay a feeling for the abstract, a desire for the infinite and illimitable which extended beyond the world and beyond the definite heaven into the utmost bounds of the universe. Western Europe refuses to be concrete with the Greek or magical and definite with the Arabian; it has no boundaries to its science or to its thought except those which are placed by nature or by its intellectual capacity. Its discoveries have only been limited by the surface of the globe and its science by the boundaries of life and form. Beyond the concrete and the algebraic x it passes to conceptions so intellectually absurd as $\sqrt{-1}$. The artistic side of this culture is dissatisfied with sculpture or with painting, even if with the brilliant achieve-

ments of this latter art the feeling for space in the background adds something of the infinite and illimitable. Better far as its expression is the rhythm and melody of music with its indefinable appeal to some spiritual faculty which appears to possess the possibility of knowledge beyond time and space.

In a more practical aspect the fundamental idea of Western culture may be said to be the search after truth. This is, in a sense, a particularly Greek quality. Greek thought was daring in its absence of restriction and magnificent in some of its conclusions, but in the search for truth it exhibited one great fault—it neglected facts. Ionian and Eleatic philosophy seized on some natural phenomenon which it observed, and instead of investigating its nature proceeded to deduce from its supposed characteristics a theory of the whole universe. Plato and the sophists seldom descended to facts, and Aristotle is first and almost unique in his accumulation of facts. Even the inductive method, invented by Socrates, did not for long adhere to them. In fact, the Greek saw in truth a subsidiary form of beauty and constructed philosophies much as he constructed statues: that is, on artistic

principles, and while his artistic intuitive spirit penetrated far into the dim mysteries of the real and universal it had no clear conception of what it had to perceive. It saw life whole, but never saw it clear. This is in exact contrast to the Western European. The European soul is not satisfied with an artistic whole unless it fits the facts, and is often capable of satisfying itself with the facts alone. Thus the seamless robe of the Mediæval Church was frequently rent by the rough hand of the heretic, who discovered some apparently true idea or fact in opposition to his creeds; and if the soaring lines of the Gothic cathedral exemplify the European desire for infinity, the daring mediæval heresies are equally a sign of the desire for truth. At the Renaissance the European spirit burst its bonds; the classical learning of the South coincided with the first observation of natural phenomena, an observation which was carried on solely for its own sake, and led through the first astronomic and scientific generalisations to the great achievements of Western Europe in all branches of science. In the seriously-minded North the Classics were regarded as a new power conferring new duties, and the knowledge gained

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from them was applied to the criticism of religious truth. Both North and South, moreover, seized hold of art, not as objective in itself, but as a means of the further expression of truth. To the Greek works of art were works of art, and that was the reason for their existence; to Europe this is not enough. Even the crude idea of the business man who asks of a picture, "What is the good of it?" is the expression of an attitude which in the mind of the critic becomes a discussion of the ideas lying behind art. In literature and painting the greatest art becomes criticism of life, it deals with humanity and it tries to reach some truth about humanity. Even the great painters of the Renaissance, though under the influence of the classical tradition, fell under the spell, but it is still more prominent in a line of English literature running from Shakespeare down to the present day. The whole spirit of this literature is concentrated on knowledge of the human being and of his relations to the universe. At the same time every other branch of human thought comes into contact at the same point. Exact scholarship attacked the early records of religion, and science brought up its forces to explain the universe and man.

This is the essential feature of the nineteenth century in Europe, far more than in other cultures, and though philosophy had failed to find an answer to the question put to it, the effort to formulate the question is the great achievement of Western Europe. No literature that Europe can produce will ever be considered great unless it deals in some way with the human problem, and no scientist, however narrow his field, will be able to leave the subject alone, until the final disillusionment and abandonment of the hope of progress, which comes with the end of the civilisation, reduces men to acquiescence in the knowledge which they have obtained, and in their failure to produce an answer.

Spengler calls the Western European the Faustine civilisation, because he says that Goethe's Faust contains the spirit and its manifestation. Faust, wearied of the profitless search for knowledge by orthodox means, turns to magic for information and is offered pleasure instead of truth. In following up pleasure he runs through a whole cycle of human experience and finds happiness in the practical service of others. And this is perhaps the end. At the moment we are still pursuing knowledge and

have reached the conclusion that man must look to himself for aid. It is when the heavens are blank that the true spirit of the civilisation is manifested. To the Arabian the absence of God made life meaningless, and Omar Khayyam's bitter pessimism is evidence of the dependence of the Arabian world on one idea. The Hindu, when his gods fail him, turns to the idea of an escape from pain as his only objective. The Greek's ideal was realisable in this world and the absence of celestial powers made little difference to him. European thought has not eliminated God, but has discounted him. Its splendid achievements in physics have pushed its knowledge to the boundaries of the physical universe and it has found in that universe nothing but law, even if at its boundaries matter seems on the point of giving way to something unknown. But at the very least it is felt that as far as this world is concerned, there is no hope of assistance from the heavens, and man must work out his own destiny. The realisation of failure, which appears almost inevitable during the next fifty years, will still leave the practical side of the European unaffected. If infinite truth is unattainable, he can still turn his attention to saving for himself

and humanity the best practical elements of the culture. The results of the intellectual and scientific achievements of the nineteenth century will not be destroyed even if the civilisation collapses, and the world will still be feeling the results of its efforts when it is dead.

H. G. Wells quotes the following extract from "Moh Ti": "The mutual attacks of state on state; the mutual usurpation of family on family; the mutual robberies of man on man; the want of kindness on the part of the sovereign and loyalty on the part of the minister; the want of tenderness and filial duty between father and son; these and such as these are things injurious to the Empire. All this has risen from want of mutual love. If but that one virtue could be made universal, the princes loving one another would have no battlefields; the chiefs of families would attempt no usurpations; men would commit no robberies; rulers and ministers would be gracious and loyal; fathers and sons would be kind and filial; brothers would be harmonious and easily reconciled. Men in general loving one another, the strong would not make prey of the weak; the many would not plunder the few; the noble would not be insolent to the mean; and

the deceitful would not impose upon the simple." "Note how Nazarene it is," says Wells. Nothing, however, could be less Nazarene. "Moh Ti's" statement could only have arisen in a culture impregnated with ideas on social rights and duties. Chinese culture had concentrated on social obligations, and its philosophy and religion are centred round the external side of human relationships. Chinese literature and art, however admirable in certain directions, have little depth in others, and what lies on the surface expresses its meaning and leaves no necessity for further inquiry. But so strong was social feeling in China that her civilisation tended to hold together in spite of its real death, and its remains have not only lasted down to the present day, but have an appearance of a revival. The Chinaman remained steeped in the atmosphere of social rights towards others and social duties to others, and the abnormal strength of these ideas, which must form the basis of every civilisation, enabled China to remain at a far higher level when her culture had decayed. Greece and Rome degenerated into formal order, which might have lasted much longer if it had not been destroyed by the Germans.

The Arabian area under the Turks is simply a dead Empire based on religion, where are combined religious and political government. All these are dead, corpses, of which some have been mummified into permanence so that their features may be traced by observers at the present day, even though life has long been extinct. Each had lived its own individual life of growth and decay, and it appears that we in our turn shall follow the same process. Western Europe follows its own line of development to its own end. Undoubtedly, in many respects we owe much to those which have gone before, but our actions, whatever we have thought and done, are as specifically our own as are our life and death.

CHAPTER IV

THOUGHT

History is not the record of the progress of man from barbarism to civilisation, nor does it consist of the records of the achievements of great men, whose energy has pushed a way for mankind where the mass would have failed hopelessly. The magnificent sweep of the curve of a civilisation has no relation to any steady upward line, and the great politicians and great thinkers who are thrown up at almost regular intervals are no more responsible for their achievements than are the fiery masses of lava the moving force of a volcano. The law of the civilisation, whatever it may be, produces at set stages a set type of ideas, and it is within this law that the artist and the thinker, however original he may appear, has to work. This is the atmosphere which we call the spirit of the age, and it is the vast force of the spirit which causes both the typical and the remarkable products of a period. Shakespeare is sixteenth century, Gibbon is

eighteenth and Hardy nineteenth century, but without the sixteenth century no Shakespeare would have been possible, nor are Gibbon or Hardy conceivable apart from their own periods. However great a man may be, the history of the time would be much the same without him, and however original his work may appear, the main lines of it have been laid down long before he has even thought of it. The actor may perhaps choose his own part, but what he has to think and say and feel in that part has been settled long beforehand by the mind which has composed the drama. Thus, in its true perspective, the history of a civilisation has the appearance of a great sweep of coast line, in which the individual eminences and projections are lost in the general trend of the whole.

At the beginning it is fair to say that there is no individual thought at all. Maine's patriarchal family did not know how to think individually. There was a certain kind of atmosphere, felt rather than comprehended. For reasons of accuracy it is safer to change the word patriarchal, and the family-tribe-household system is a better description of a society about to develop a culture. Such a

society has a system of conventions, rules and laws, which are obeyed instinctively and altered, if at all, unconsciously. It has a religion which is based on the facts of external Nature and to which a personal origin is given. Such was, as far as can be ascertained, the condition of the Germans in Europe, the Aryans in India and the early invaders of Greece. Underneath the surface the society may have a whole set of ideas such as those described by Frazer in the "Golden Bough," but they have ceased to be predominant and are merged or transformed in the later stratum. At the first faint stirrings of the culture-spirit these superstitions have been pushed into the background, where they survive as isolated and meaningless customs. The great exceptions to this rule of the development of the culture are found in the area of a pseudo-morphosis, where a newly-born culture is attempting to grow up under one which is fully developed. Such was the condition of Asia Minor and Syria in the first centuries A.D.; such was Russia in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, though the influence there was less, and the superimposed culture less advanced. After the family-tribe-household system, society turns towards feu-

dalism and the long period of growth, of which the Middle Ages in Europe are typical, begins.

In the Middle Ages the characteristic attitude of a culture is an absence of distinction between what exists and what is felt to exist. In the realms of thought and religion there is no contest between feeling and reason. Feeling is invariably victorious. Whatever may be the names and attributes of his gods, man lives in a religious atmosphere. His gods are wholly part of his life; he is surrounded by forces which express themselves in signs and portents and miracles, and which take a keen interest in him and his fate. He himself shows a reverence and respect for them in relatively simple actions of prayer and sacrifice. But in this religious atmosphere he does not think of himself as an individual, nor is his relation to the gods that of one isolated being. He is a member of a tribe, a race, a people, and the relation exists mainly between the gods and the race of which he is a member. The Jews imagined Jehovah striking wildly at good and evil alike if He was offended with the Israelites. The Hindu Aryans prayed for the success of their raids and battles. Mediæval man visualises plagues and earthquakes as punishments

for national sin. On the whole the gods tend to be tribal, and it is under this aspect that the priest turns up in history. He propitiates the god in the interests of the tribe, not in that of the individual. The heads of the Aryan households in India, in Greece and in Rome conduct their own operations in front of their household gods. It is in the tribal temple and for tribal worship that a priest is necessary. Then he stands as the representative of the tribe in front of the god, and uses his special knowledge of the god to propitiate him for some tribal enterprise. And so the priest comes to be of considerable importance and to exist almost as an independent order.

To these statements there are apparently striking exceptions, due in each case to a pseudo-morphosis. The Arabian "Middle Ages" were dominated by the relics of the classical civilisation, and, in consequence, show neither the social forms, nor the religious thought, in the form which might have been expected. Western European development is influenced in an even more striking manner. Western Europe was not only affected by the ideas of the Roman Empire, it was also strongly

affected by the achievements of Arabia, and it was completely dominated by the Christian religion. This threefold influence had the most striking superficial results. The Arabian attitude towards religion, exemplified in the Caliphate, combined with the ideas of Rome, produced the imposing struggle between the Empire and Papacy. Arabian influence working on Christian religion and early Christian criticism produced the magnificent structure of scholasticism. Scholasticism is in fact typical of the efforts of the fettered human mind when it is accidentally faced with great and vitally important problems, and the struggle between realists and nominalists in Europe is similar to the Trinitarian controversy in the eastern part of the Roman Empire. The Arabian pseudomorphosis exhausted its intellect in endless discussions about the Logos and substances, while the Westerns debated the question of universals. In both cases, however, the result is purely negative and has no meaning for the advance of the civilisation. The splendid fabric worked by scholasticism is abandoned, and the Reformers quite rightly threw the

books of Duns Scotus into the quadrangles of Oxford, and used them as so much waste paper.

The struggle between the Empire and the Papacy is equally superficial. It does not even conceal the real forces working underneath, and the victories, which the Pope gained with the help of the feudal princes, were turned into defeats when he could no longer count on his allies. Feudalism used the contest for its own purposes, and so did the sentiment of nationality until the latter had gained sufficient strength to ignore the rival vicegerents of God. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, Pope and Emperor alike are in their political aspect nothing more than feudal rulers. Much more important to Western Europe, however, is the influence of the Christian religion.

Whereas normally at the beginning of a civilisation, religious ideas can be understood as well as felt by every one, Europe took over a theology of its religion which no one could understand. The Wotans and Thors of the Germans and Norsemen, who would otherwise, presumably, have lasted in some clear form until the Renaissance and perhaps later, disappeared, and the unfortunate people were

brought face to face with the most complicated philosophical problems. Under these circumstances the European did his best with the materials to hand, and using the saints as local gods, gave them the credit of miracles, while the pantheon was strictly limited to four. Even so, the development of his thought was utterly twisted, and the usual feeling of man in a developing civilisation, that he understands his gods and they understand him, as the Greeks and Egyptians felt, was never properly achieved. People, it is true, could make a jest of the Mass, could produce God the Father on the stage at a miracle play, and could use the church as a sort of recreation room. All these things are typical of early thought, but the Middle Ages did develop the power of the priest, and such an immense growth in the power of the priesthood is not normal. In the end the mediæval man, though he made God in his own image and expressed in Him his deepest feelings, could not understand God; however much he made God into something like himself, there was still a mystery about Him, and he never felt himself secure without the power of the priest.

In Greece and India and Egypt the more nor-

mal sentiment prevailed. The gods arise from the heart and mind of the people, and the priests are of little importance for the individual. Such people as Zeus and Apollo did not command anything mysterious or obscure in their rites. Such conceptions as Dyu and Indra could be approached by any one who needed their aid. The Egyptian worshipped a heterogeneous collection of totem, Nature and animal gods, but here, too, when the culture developed, there is a feeling of unity between man and the supernatural, a comprehension of the one by the other which makes the atmosphere of mystery in Europe out of place.

In the darkness which envelops the growth of nearly every culture except that of Western Europe, the gradual breakdown of the universal feeling can only vaguely be observed; but the indications in Egypt, and especially in Arabia, are sufficient to make us sure that the course of events there was the same. In the Rig-Veda we have plenty of light, but it is difficult to date the hymns. In the later portions, the hymns tend to be monotheistic; sometimes the writer forgets all gods save one, and addresses the one as the ruler of the uni-

verse. Sometimes some great creative spirit behind Nature, behind humanity, and behind the gods is apprehended: "He who has given us life, He who is the Creator, He who knows all the places in the universe, He is one although He bears the name of many gods." Towards the end of the Rig-Veda the professional priest becomes important. He is specially proficient in performing rites, and the hymns with which the Deities are to be addressed come into his hands. The thought of the culture splits up into main lines. In Western Europe scholasticism produced Wycliffe and a still more striking figure, Bishop Pecock.

In other cultures, on the contrary, the Renaissance movement appears as suddenly as a lightning flash. But whether gradually or suddenly, a Renaissance movement appears everywhere. In Europe causes are sometimes assigned to the movement, such as the capture of Constantinople in 1453, or the discovery of printing. Such argument is futile; the Renaissance would have occurred even if there had been no Greece, or if Athens had had as little influence on Europe as Peking. The forms assumed by the movement were decided by the Classics, but their influence, in spite of their

superficial importance, is nothing but an accident. The real movement occurs wholly within the culture. At this point in the history of the civilisation, the point which in Europe is covered by the terms Renaissance and Reformation, and by similar phenomena in all other cultures, man begins to free himself from the universal feeling. He realises himself as distinct from the universe and becomes conscious of his own individuality. He begins to question his own personal relation to both the natural and the supernatural. Renaissance and Reformation are the same phenomenon viewed from different aspects. Man is brought face to face with the universe, with Nature, and with God. In the line taken by human thought at this moment the fundamental symbol of the civilisation manifests itself clearly, and apart from the obscurities that had so far hedged it round.

The Reformation in Europe and in Arabia means that for the first time man comes face to face with his God. During the Middle Ages the individual had lost himself in the crowd and had been saved or damned *en masse*. The liberation of the feeling of personality forced man to choose for himself in the realm of

thought. All Henry VIII.'s manœuvres, his suppression of the monasteries, his doctrinal changes such as they were, his laws which burst the bonds of Rome, are relatively superficial in the sphere of thought. What really mattered in England was the impulse from Germany and Switzerland, which forced each Englishman to direct his attention to matters which previously he had considered fixed. The universal opinion of the Middle Ages was broken up. Luther's insistence on faith makes religion necessarily an individual matter. The universal Protestant appeal all over the world to individual decision destroys the possibility of unanimity. Henceforth each man must choose for himself.

Mohammedanism in the same way demands individual choice. Mohammed had discovered nothing vitally new, and the Nestorians, the most trinitarian of the sects with which the new religion had to deal, were not particularly antagonistic. He also insists on the question of faith and places the question of personal choice in the forefront of his programme. But it should be noticed what the choice is. Individual opinion is not left free to choose what it will believe; the older ideas retain some of

their force, and man must make his choice between those sects which are powerful enough to give themselves a chance of survival in the free fight which immediately follows. It is for this reason, among others, that Spengler brings together the names of Pythagoras, Mohammed and Cromwell.

Pythagoras, too, was a religious reformer. He appears to have discarded the anthropomorphic Olympian deities for figures more in accordance with our ideas of what a god should be, and to have concentrated on the mystery religion of Dionysus, Demeter, and Persephone. He adapted or altered magical ceremonies into courses of initiation and sacramental religion, in which salvation was to be found by faith and knowledge. He also tried to force his new creeds on to the rest of the world by force. He established the tradition followed by Æschylus and Plato, but the weakness of the Pythagorean movement is significant of the absence of religion in the fundamental symbol of Greece, just as the strength and unity of Mohammedanism is typical of Arabia. The movement, however, is the same, the sword is the arbiter between the creeds and confessions and sects. Religion is still a vital

matter, and even in Greece Socrates is executed because he rejected the gods of his country. Cromwell is typical of the feeling of the man who thinks he has got himself into right relation with his God; though if we consider him in relation to the Scotch Covenanter he is much too tolerant to be typical. The vital matter to Cromwell was the freedom and predominance of those who thought and felt as he did. Mohammedanism simply offered death or tribute to the Christian, and death pure and simple to any pagans it came across.

But here in this great break in the spirit of the civilisation there is another factor. In the Middle Ages, as we have said, the population tends to think and feel as a whole, the herd instinct has no rival force strong enough to break it up. At the Reformation only a portion of the people progress with the movement of the culture, while the larger section remains behind. Whatever the force may be which produces the movement of the civilisation, in its later stages it only affects a section of the population. Except during the more violently revolutionary periods of the Reformation, only a minority even took an active interest in the religious question, and no sooner

had the creeds settled down than they stiffened into formulæ, accepted as always because every one accepted them. This was certainly the case in Arabia and Western Europe.

At this moment, too, appears in its fullest form the tendency which in a less important way appears earlier, especially in Europe. The priesthood reaches its climax; Western Europe had had one ready made, but the great power of the Egyptian and Hindu priesthoods dates from the time at which religion becomes incomprehensible to the majority and a priest in consequence more than ever a necessity. Arabian religion is too definite for this development to be of vital importance, and the Greek has too little feeling of the mystery in his nature. There is no essential difference between the English peasant who attended church through the influence of the squire and parson, and the French peasant whose spiritual director was the local *curé*. Everywhere at this time society divides itself into two sections —the minority, whose thought has some meaning for the development of the culture, and the majority, whose thought being non-existent has no meaning at all. Of the latter, the best example is the peasantry of South Europe.

Man then has looked to God and has considered his relation to God. He has next to look at the external world, of which the savage is completely a part and from which mediæval man is not very far removed. The European spirit turned immediately in two directions; in literature it began the investigation of man, but, even more typically, it began the investigation of the facts which have led him to the splendid scientific achievements of the present age. At the Renaissance man for the first time begins to question and to account for the phenomena of external nature. Mediæval man takes the natural phenomena at their face value, and it is typical of his attitude of mind that he does not stop to argue about them. If there is any difficulty about them, they are referred to the gods and are left at that. At the bursting into full bloom of the culture, this attitude is dropped for one of investigation, and the world starts on that long process which makes its nineteenth century one huge question mark. Each culture makes its investigations, of course, by methods which are in harmony with its fundamental symbol. The elements of geometry are found in India, apparently derived from measure-

ments connected with the position of the sacred fire. The Arabian alchemist started to look for the philosopher's stone, and the Arabian physician for the elixir of life, and they almost immediately stumbled on striking chemical and medicinal discoveries. The Greeks were less practical and more intellectual than the Arabians. The opening mind of the Greek was first impressed with the striking facts of Nature and without waiting to investigate their nature, straightway proceeded to propound theories about them. Thales, Anaximenes, and Anaximander were alike in the way in which they seized a natural fact and interpreted through it the whole universe. Thales observed that the sea was infinite and that moisture was necessary to growth, and asserted that water was the First Principle. Anaximenes taught that warmth and cold arose from mere rarefaction and condensation, and concluded that with sufficient rarefaction water might turn into fire; he deduced the result that the human soul was nothing but air, and that infinite air was God. Heraclitus was similarly impressed by fire and built up a theory of the Logos which no one has ever understood. If we care to do so, we may at-

tribute the origin of such sciences as psychology and astronomy to these philosophers, but these efforts of awakened curiosity of human beings in Greece tended in another direction, and true science was with them, as with us, a later product. In Arabia, Greece, India, and Europe, the widening spirit of the culture produces speculation about external nature, and however little the results of the speculation are worth, at least man realises that there is something to speculate about. He looks at Nature from the outside instead of regarding himself as part of it. And he does it always at the same period.

From the scientific point of view, however, India, Arabia, and Greece had all radical defects. India was preoccupied with religion and neglected everything which had no bearing on its thought. Arabia was dominated by the personality of God, and great as were the Arabian achievements, they were limited in their possibilities. Phenomena were all due to the will of God, and the conception of natural law was alien to its spirit. Greece, too, had the limitation of its feeling; the Greek did not stay his course for such base purposes as the careful investigation and collation of facts;

he saw them and rushed to create by pure insight or philosophy a theory of the universe he thinks he has seen. The Greek throughout his culture preferred abstract thought, even though it was living, to the study of concrete fact. From this aspect, at least, Western Europe is infinitely superior to the others. The European is willing to leave the philosophy to others while he investigates the fact. While Christianity dominated Europe the first scientists were patiently inquiring into details, neither knowing nor caring anything of the effect of their discoveries on religion. "This is the fact," they seem to say, "you can make what you like of it." About 1536, Copernicus had discovered that the geocentric theory of the universe would not account for the facts, and had propounded the heliocentric theory. Bruno was burnt for teaching the rotation of the earth. One of the greatest declarations of the spirit of Western Europe is Galileo's famous "*E pur si muove*"; it is the scientific conscience before which, in the end, all other forms of thought are forced to bow. At the same period Leonardo da Vinci stated that fossils were the remains of organic beings; Gilbert wrote his book on the magnet; Gesner

led the way to zoology; Belon was occupied with fishes and birds. A whole series of names led the way to the scientific description of the human body. To the speculation of Greece, to the detail of Arabia, we have to add the accuracy of Europe, and the end of the story has not yet been reached.

Man then looks at the universe. To Western Europe and Arabia, religion and philosophy are, naturally, at first one. But even in Europe the Reformation has its philosophical side. Protestantism is a great expansion of the idea of the infinite. The mediæval God who had sat in the heavens overlooking the world with hell beneath, and with infinite power, is removed now to an infinite distance. His infinite power remains, but more insistence, if possible, is laid on His infinite righteousness which brings with it the conclusion that good works can avail the human being nothing. Only by semi-magical methods is it possible to approach His throne. Faith becomes the cardinal virtue in a universe in which everything is good except man, and is mysterious because of the workings of infinite intelligence. India's religion is philosophy. One feature of the Upanishads is their insistence on the one uni-

versal spirit. All is Brahman, and man must meditate on this visible world as beginning, ending and breathing in the Brahman. Human life is as a river which in the end merges its individuality in that of the sea. The human spirit is itself a part of the Divine. In the human being the Divine is present and the human spirit is therefore not merely with the Divine, but itself Divine. This is and remains the truth for the Hindu, and his further thought is directed towards knowledge of the way to the reunion of these two aspects of Divine and human, which though externally different are internally one.

It is, however, in Greece that the purely philosophic spirit finds its fullest expression. Almost careless of external facts, almost equally careless of anything like real religion, the Greek was free to devote himself to the world of thought. The early Greek philosophers are interested in external nature only so far as it supplies a clue to the solution of the problem of the universe. Free from the necessity of investigating facts, they immediately reach the conception of a first principle which lies at the root of all external phenomena. Anaximenes as-

serted that air was eternal, imperishable, and endowed with consciousness. It was the soul of the world. Heraclitus reached similar conclusions about fire, and developed a sort of pantheistic monism similar in some ways to that of India. He thought the sun was about a foot in diameter, but he knew that man's mind could not produce any certain knowledge from its own interior resources. He had the wildest conceptions of external phenomena, and yet he could attain with sure foot to the main principles underlying thought and reason. With his contemporaries we find the same tendency.

In the end Renaissance and Reformation result in the free action of the human intelligence. Calvin, Luther, Knox, and the rest of them may have been intolerant, but at least the result of Protestantism was to make it evident to human beings that it was possible to think differently even on religious subjects, and at last to make religious toleration a necessity. Even if, as in Arabia, conformity to the established religion is insisted on, religion has lost a great deal of the territory it had once ruled. There are places in which the writ of faith does not run, and in these spheres speculation

and thought have free play. In Greece, religion was driven from the philosophic field almost completely, and what remained of it took refuge in the obscurities of the mysteries. The formal worship of the city states had approximately the significance which we should attach to the state opening of Parliament or to singing "God Save the King" at the close of a concert. From the religious point of view it is meaningless, but most people would feel that there was something wrong, if it were omitted. To the mysteries the masses of the people turned for consolation, which otherwise they would have been denied, and in the mysteries the priest, for the first time in Greece, began to assume somewhat of importance as an intermediary between God and man. Important as they are and became, the mysteries remain in the background, and a superficial view of Greece would omit them altogether, not because nothing is known of them, but because, though the facts of human nature made something of the sort necessary, they were at this period hardly anything but a concession to the weakness of humanity. That they developed later on into a very important influence during the decadence of

Greece, and as a model for early Christianity, is of no significance for the history of Greece from 450-250 B.C.

These two centuries, which correspond roughly to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in Europe and 650-850 in Arabia, are the great period of the individual thinker. In Greece the philosopher comes first with all individual thinkers, and he is a mathematician or a scientist only in the second place. The progress of thought, which had started with the thinkers of Ionia, continued with the destructive criticism of the sophists, and finished with the more constructive efforts of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. What Plato thought about the external universe is hardly worth knowing; it is what he has to say of ultimate values, of the Divine in man, of the relationship of truth and beauty and its reflections in the world, which remains a magnificent example of the Greek sense of the fitness of things, and of the supreme Greek conceptions of beauty. Scientifically there were in Greece what seem to us like brilliant guesses, such as those of Democritus and his atomic theory, and finally there comes Aristotle.

Aristotle comes at the end of a period. He

is the last of the great systematisers, the last of the philosophers who were scientists also, but the last of the scientists who was also a great philosopher. His endless curiosity made him start at the beginning with the facts of external nature and natural history, with the details of politics and the laws of reasoning. The attitude of the Greek compelled him to make an attempt at raising a systematic philosophy of the universe. The two forces were incompatible and mutually divergent. Plato could succeed to a certain extent by neglecting facts—incidentally, no one has ever succeeded by allowing for them, so that there is something to be said for his method. Aristotle's inductive method and historical qualities are his greatest glories, and his intuition and splendid guesswork in science his next claim to fame. That he failed is of no importance from our point of view, for he is the type of individual who appears of necessity at this period, and of necessity also fails. The failure is different in different civilisations, but in each the facts have to be harnessed to the ideas which the culture feels to be true and which, to it, are of more importance than the facts themselves.

India even, unscientific though its spirit was,

had during the period from 850-650 B.C. developed the elements of geometry and a sort of theory of numbers in the Sulva Sutras. Panini of Candahar turned to grammar and demonstrated the roots of the Aryan language. Kapila's philosophy analysed the human consciousness as a means of discovering that goal of the Hindu intellect, the way of escape. Arabian civilisation was by its nature debarred from philosophy in any such form as the Greek. All the normal philosophical subjects were included within the barbed-wire fence of religion and defended by the artillery of faith. But by way of magic the Arabian scientist proceeded to chemistry and medicine. Djafar was the first towards the end of the eighth century to describe nitric acid and aqua regia. He knows that a metal when calcined increases in weight. Rhazes, physician in chief to the hospital of Bagdad, describes the properties of sulphuric acid. Avicenna in the tenth century is almost as encyclopedic as Aristotle. He writes on science, health, physics, astronomy, mathematics, language, the soul, Euclid and many other subjects—in all showing an astonishing correctness of thought and breadth of view. His guesses, such as those on the origin

of mountains by upheaval or by the effect of water which cuts away the soft strata and leaves the hard intact, are as brilliant as those of Democritus.

In Western Europe, philosophy in its beginnings had been a part of religion. Descartes, Malebranche, Geulincx, are quite as much dominated by the religious as by the philosophic spirit. Even Pascal and Newton regard their mathematics as a religious achievement. Before the seventeenth century religious signposts had warned trespassers and gave details of the results of various prosecutions. But religion was in the end forced to retire, when it refused to withdraw its embargo, and European thought was able to make the best use of its opportunities owing to its achievements in mathematics. Mathematics is to the European, in a way, what philosophy was to the Greek. It satisfies, in its Cartesian and Newtonian form, both his desire for the infinite and for practical accuracy, and it lies at the root of all the applied sciences. Other civilisations had their mathematics, culminating in Greece in conics and solid geometry, in Arabia with spherical trigonometry, but in Europe alone has it become the basis of all its technical prog-

ress. Mathematics in its pure form is still a "useless" science, but with mechanics, astronomy, dynamics and the rest of them, which form to-day the comprehensive science of physics, it is the typical scientific expression of Europe, and in the end comes to that startling region where matter and energy seem to merge and all the sciences become one. The great names of Descartes, Kepler, Newton, Leibniz, are peaks in the range of thought which ascends always higher in its general elevation. Like the Greek philosophers, they tend at first to be isolated thinkers; like them, too, they are not specialists and see nothing incongruous in the religious dissertations of Descartes or Kepler. Descartes' scepticism is parallel to that of some of the sophists—not to that of the Pyrrhonists —but his "*cogito ergo sum*" is a strong assertion of the practical side of Europe. Plato and Newton, as far apart as East and West, are yet united in common bond of mathematics, which the one with the feeling of faith felt would explain everything, and which the other, for whom intelligence itself was more than half faith, succeeded in calling in, and used to explain an extraordinary proportion of difficulties. Greece started with philosophy and was

in the end forced to take science into account; Europe reversed the process, and though it would be an exaggeration to say that it started with science, it is certainly true that its philosophers are more important later. There is far more likeness between Kant and Plato than between Pascal and Protagoras. It is Berkeley with his subjective idealism who parallels Protagoras with his relativism; and Kant, like Aristotle, the last of the great original philosophers, went over the ground so far covered by humanity, and for the last time was able to reach a conclusion which avoided scepticism. For the future, philosophy was either transcendental and mystical, as in the Stoics or Hegelians, or pure philosophic doubt, as in the Pyrrhonists and Agnostics.

In the eighteenth century there is another striking change. In Europe, Greece and Arabia alike thought has progressed through individuals alone, and it continues to do so until the end of the period. But there are signs of a change. Certain ideas tend to become more widely spread, until they become an attitude of mind with effects far beyond the usual limited range of ideas; they become almost "popular." The early eighteenth century in Eng-

land is an age of good sense, of rationalism, of scepticism. Creeds, tests, and services lose their supporting reasons, and it becomes necessary to apologise for what was formerly a matter of congratulation. The scepticism of Hume and Gibbon, the good sense of Locke, the rationalism of the Encyclopedists and Voltaire is parallel not only in fact but in spirit to the early Sceptic school in Greece. Individualism in thought is beginning to give way, the great thinkers tend to disappear, and the new age is an age of ideas which affect, in one of their often contradictory forms, all the upper class of society, and in the end penetrate, though in a degraded form, throughout all those classes which can in any sense be supposed to think. At the beginning of the century, religion and accepted beliefs fall into a state of decay and are despised by the more advanced philosophical thinkers; but philosophy itself, as well as science, leads to blank negation. During the century there is a desire to escape from the conventions which are now despised, and Rousseau and the Stoics sum up the scattered thoughts of the previous century about the state of Nature, in which there was supposed to be something innocent and splen-

did, as opposed to the guilty and sophisticated attitude of civilised man.

This leads to the nineteenth century. In that century there is everywhere a striking absence of really great thinkers, and a striking presence of great ideas. It is, in addition, the great period of science and specialised scientific thinking. Philosophy becomes naturalistic, and abandoning the effort to solve universal problems, begins to aim rather at practical ethics, and to justify itself on that basis. But the nineteenth century is important and interesting enough to merit a section by itself. At the end comes pessimism and disillusionment, and then as the period changes, stagnation in almost all departments of thought. When the 150 or 200 years separating the civilisation from 280-100 B.C. or A.D. 950-1150 or A.D. 1789-1975 have passed, the civilisation is seen entering on its old age. There is nothing more that it can accomplish in the realm of thought. Roman philosophy is a second-rate adaptation, on ethical lines, of Stoicism; the literature of the time tends to prosaic paths with mundane ends. The scientists and thinkers turn to compilations summarising the work of earlier ages and there is an apparent literary and philo-

sophical activity which extends in Rome from A.D. 100-200. Finally, it is the period of the codification of the law in its ultimate form, as the work of Manu, of Hammurabi, and of Gaius indicate. As a living force, thought is dead.

CHAPTER V

ART

Art critics and connoisseurs are as a rule inconsistent in their attitude to their subject. Being interested in only one branch, in Greek sculpture or Italian painting, they disclaim all knowledge of or care for sculpture beyond the Greek, or painting beyond the European, yet simultaneously they expend much effort in tracing the descent of Greek from Egyptian or Italian from Classical. They do not make up their mind whether it is the origin of their art or its spirit which matters, and are thus misled by temporal or geographical connections between Romanesque and Gothic, or Minoan and Greek, and arguing hotly on these subjects, forget what art should mean. It is the spirit behind art which is all-important; when that spirit changes, descent or inheritance of technical equipment is of secondary importance. We should probably be right in assuming that the new spirit would have found expression for itself, whatever the forms which preceded.

Remembering then that art is the natural expression of a whole civilisation in the sense we have laid down, we must trace the growth of art in each separately, disregarding for the moment the influences, if any, of one civilisation on another. We shall not expect to find all forms of art equally exhibited in each civilisation, for the fundamental symbol of some is incompatible with some forms of art; in all we shall find architecture, for it is in this that its meaning and vitality first finds expression, and of this our remains are, on the whole, considerable. Where possible or necessary, we shall discuss sculpture, music, painting, as they become available. The treatment is difficult, because all discussion of art is apt to be futile when we allow our imagination too much liberty, or become obsessed by the relations between art and morality or art and life. True art sets out to teach no lesson, to inculcate no theory; it is an unconscious taking of shape by forces of which we know nothing except by what art has shown us.

A number of facts which occur in each civilisation, in the history of its art, stand out and may be first considered, being mentioned as if each civilisation developed *in vacuo,* in spite of

our having no example of such a development, unless it be in Egypt, where Elliott, Smith and Perry put the beginnings of all culture. Of early Babylonia, which some experts would regard as predating Egypt, we know as yet too little to speak with certainty. Early Indian art is a blank, for the recent discoveries in the Punjab are pure Sumerian. Greece, Arabia and Western Europe are all distortions from a development such as we are seeking, while Central America is too vast and as yet too vague a field to be of use; its architecture was, however, well under way before Cambodian influences were possible, and towns six miles long are reputed to have existed in 1000 B.C.

Architecture is the first real art to appear in each civilisation; domestic architecture of the non-cultural stage is not real art. When the soul, or whatever we care to call it, comes to birth it flings up vast masses as a sort of protest or sacrifice to powers which it cannot understand. Thus the first architecture on any large scale is almost always religious, and is a sort of symbol of the struggle between life and death. In the instances we can trace we have the ziggurat, the pyramid, and the cathedral. In Arabia the basilica form very soon became the

basis of the Christian church, and ultimately of the Byzantine mosque. In Central America the rectangular pyramid was early developed.

During this early period there is no conscious thinking or theorising about art; in many cases no specialised class of artist at all, for every artisan is himself also an artist. Art is the purely spontaneous, metaphysical expression of a civilisation, working through vessels of all kinds.

Each civilisation has one art which is most typical of itself, and which reaches its highest form at the same period as the political form is at its highest, and lasts approximately the same time. This art is determined by the fundamental symbol, or general idea, of the civilisation and is called by Spengler homologous. We have therefore not to take each art and give a history, but to give a statement of the homologous arts.

Each district of the whole does not share equally in each art, nor is it necessary, though it is usual, that the district which reaches the height in politics or thought, should also reach the height in art.

During the nineteenth centuries, art becomes "romantic," *i.e.*, it is severed from a

stable centre or compromise between the finite and infinite, and is carried away by the indefinite mass of emotions which are mistaken for the infinite incomprehensible of real art. At the close of these periods creative art practically ceases. What follows is more or less futile playing with new styles and rearrangement of old motives. There is no further creative power, though the creative and æsthetic impulse remains.

Towards the close of a civilisation, *i.e.*, at its Roman period, there is an impulse to vastness and massiveness, expressive of the material tendency of the civilisation. The Imperial fora, the colonnades of Karnak, the Port of London Authority and the new banks, are typical of this period, and take the place of temples and palaces. The urge towards massiveness cannot keep within bounds; it is the beginning of the return to the amorphous, such as we had noted in politics also.

These may be accepted as the dogmas. To return to architecture as the first artistic expression.

In many instances architecture is less important than other arts, but even then, in the space feeling we can see the general idea work-

ing its effect, vaguely foreshadowing what is to come; just as in literature, notably the epic and drama, we may see the same tendency. In the vaulting of the roof, in the ornamentation of windows and columns, in line and mass, difficult as it may be for us to realise the truth, we should not be so blind as to miss the germs of the fully developed symbol. The pernicious influences in which we have been brought up force us to look at inessentials, or at best to try to associate art-forms with morals and ethics. In four cases we can trace the appearance of a new form and can give ourselves an opportunity to distinguish between origin and validity; the IV. Dynasty in Egypt brought the true pyramid and the reliefs of a peculiarly Egyptian quality, *i.e.*, almost two-dimensional and cyclic in arrangement; the classical shows, by the negation of the palace types which lay ready to hand to be developed into the temple and by the rejection of Mycenean vases, what was to be its future; Arabia converted the classical ornamentation and arrangement into a far vaguer, more mystical, even if equally passive form, proclaiming the dome basilica, the arabesque and the pillared arch; Western Europe struggled to free itself from the influ-

ences of Romanesque, began to point its arches, to make the windows more unsubstantial and to raise the vaulting of the roof. The "space feeling" expressed by each is different and is the important feature and the original. It matters very little that Cheops copied his pyramid from Zoser, that Greek temples may have been derived from Karnak, that Arabian dome basilicas were modelled on the Roman basilica, that Western Europe had other churches to copy. All of them in their full form express the religious attitude as it was felt by the masses of the people during their Gothic period, and each of them a different (for there is not one religion any more than there is one civilisation). Where we know the myths, *i.e.*, in Greece, Arabia and Western Europe, we find that the same feeling lies behind them as behind the architecture; and more, that the architectural period is identical with the mythologising and the true epic period.

Myths are not invented, nor epics thought out; they are the natural growth of the time, and it is laid down that any who think must think in myths, and any who write must write epic. It is the time when the religious idea of the civilisation is settling, the age of real faith

and belief, the time of Dante and St. Thomas, of Neo-Platonists and Gnostics, of Orphic cosmogonists and Homer. The whole of life, the life which matters to us as philosophical historians, is active and unconscious in its inward urge, it is a childlike spirit of unself-consciousness, when all spheres of human activity are more closely coherent than at any other time. All thinking and feeling are one, and move onward together, driven not by external necessity, but by inner compulsion. The Gothic cathedrals were built, as we know, by every one who had any part in his city, high and low working in unanimity; the pyramids must have been built in the same way, and we are mistaken in thinking that they were the work of slaves under the lash; the ziggurats must have been similar, and we are wrong to argue that the age of faith in Assyria was as brutal as the period of the empire. Whether this be phantasy or not, there can be no doubt that there is a close relationship between the art and the thinking of the period. Things and beliefs exist and are taken at their real value; no other age would be capable of such a thing as scholasticism.

In those civilisations where architecture is

not the most typical art, *i.e.*, everywhere but Egypt, it reaches its highest form about 200 years before the highest point in politics is attained. Its achievement is considerable, whether we think of the Temples of Pæstum or the French cathedrals; by the fifteenth century in Europe, *i.e.*, by 650 B.C. in Greece, the main features have been developed, the space feeling is clearly defined, and what follows is the working out of what is potentially contained in previous forms. When the pyramids had fully developed, they ceased to evolve, ceased almost to exist, and the torch was taken over by the temple and temple reliefs and colonnades; when the wooden temple and its Doric columns were superseded by the solid stone structures of the seventh and sixth centuries, when also the geometric vase painting had filled all the available space, as in the François vase, and had given a clear indication of the free Greek spirit, there was no more advance in that style; sculpture became all important, while vase painting was more plastic in spirit, and the temple never again reached the heights of 550-450. In Arabia, though the course of events is obscured by the pseudomorphosis, the mosaic becomes more and more

important—we may contrast it with the Roman tessellated pavements—and the solid classical decorations break up into the more mysterious and unsubstantial ideas of the mosque.

The fundamental symbol is dominant and is realised in each sphere of life. If we had to guess, being told the symbol of each, what was to be its most typical art form and where we should find its spirit most clearly expressed, there can be little doubt what we should choose, in three cases at least, where we have some knowledge of the facts. For Greece we should hit on sculpture in its more concrete form; for Western Europe, certainly the music of infinity; for Egypt, an ornamented clearly directed passage. Arabia, though the fundamental symbol is clear, is less easy to define, unless it be by negatives; thus Egyptian architecture, Greek sculpture, Western music, would all be inadequate to express the Arabian spirit, as would Babylonian sculpture and Chinese painting; some form of painting with a restricted range of colour and of subjects, but insisting, above all, on the background, might satisfy the Arabian soul; we should, in any case, be unlikely to guess that the symbol could be represented by anything so successfully as

by the arabesque. India must clearly be a negation of form, in music and the plastic arts, and the negation of form involves the surfeit of forms in later sculpture. China would find expression in painting and glazed pottery. Of the Hittite, Assyrian and the Mayan, we know too little to be able to guess, but we may have our opinions, which will be contradicted or supported by further discoveries.

To the final and perfect expression of this typical art each civilisation tends, and the typical art we may, with Spengler, call homologous, avoiding thereby the traps of the false analogies which have deceived critics of art as much as, in other spheres, the scientists. A whole mass of difficulties is cleared up as soon as we have realised that architecture, sculpture and music have to be compared in the Egyptian, Classical and Western civilisations, and that it is in relation to these homologous arts that we must discuss and consider all the others. It has never yet been clearly affirmed why geometric art ousted Mycenean; we are told that it was introduced by the "Dorian invaders," by the Heraclids on their return, for our historians have been unable to rid them-

selves of the notion that a new art form must be brought by a new "race" and cannot believe that it is the natural growth of a certain area, whatever the race which happens to be there; though in fact the power of a culture, once it has been brought to birth, is sufficient to assimilate the most diverse peoples. We can see now that geometric art is the first real Greek art, and though Mycenean naturally was not without effect, it was too much on the outskirts of a culture and too much at the close to have an overwhelming effect, such as the Roman had on early Arabia. Thus all purely Greek art was geometric, not only in vases, but as we now know, terra cotta and bronze work as well; for the Greek conception of space and the Greek sense of form was essentially geometric, just as the Greek branch of mathematics was geometry. A fully developed red-figure vase shows wonderful skill and art in its lines, in its drapery and design, but the effect of the drawing, of the light and shade is poles removed from the drapery or the lines of a Titian or Botticelli. All forms of classical art must, therefore, express this feeling, at least, until the creative power is on the wane

and the highest potentialities of the culture have been fulfilled. This feeling is most completely manifested in the statue.

In the same way all European forms express the urge to infinity, the desire to get away from physical limitations beyond the restrictions of the medium which is employed, to break up the whole of the material world into an infinite number of infinitely small points of tension in a magnetic field—science, like religion, being the representative of a later stage of the fundamental symbol. Thus all European arts tend towards the musical, and the type of music must be that which is an intuitive manifestation of infinity rather than, like that of other cultures, the expression of some definite emotion.

Egypt is perhaps more simple because it never got beyond architecture, and all its arts are architectural. Even the sculpture is far more architectural than plastic, the statues almost always look straight ahead, and are part of an architectural whole; if we want to see the difference between such sculpture and that of Greece, we should compare an Egyptian statue, *e.g.*, Amenemhet, with the Berlin goddess. Once we have felt it, no further talk of

fundamental symbols is needed. There is in Egypt a small attempt to escape from the magnificent directness, directedness rather, in the flowered capitals, but there is little change throughout the whole of the civilisation, until all sense of art had failed and the beauties of the Middle Kingdom gave place to the colossal monstrosities of the Theban Empire, replacing quality by quantity, and taking over old forms.

In Arabia, though we know little about music, our knowledge of architecture, sculpture, and thought, is so full that we can afford to dispense with some of the arts, even if they were ever of any importance. Only a slight understanding of the Arabian soul shows us that it turned too much to the discussion of substances, of the logos, of the limitedness of time, of Kismet, to find active expression in some of the arts; in all that the Arabian does he produces an effect of appearance instead of reality, and his arts are to us the best way of understanding, if we would only admit it, the incomprehensibilities of Plotinus and St. John. The Arabian fell back on magical thought less than the Indian, but more than the Greek and European, so that the x and Zero remain the

two typical discoveries of Arabia and completely illustrate their art, their science and their philosophy.

As thought develops, art develops too, and at the tragic stage of a civilisation is preparing for its last and finest flight. It has never been fully realised why tragedy occurs when it does, *i.e.*, "contemporaneously" in Europe, Greece, Arabia in the drama which spread to India, and in Egypt not in literature but in the tomb reliefs. Tragedy differs in each civilisation, in its plots and in its appeal (as the Greek doctrine of catharsis should prove). It must come before the time of rationalism, and though there be an apparent revival later, it is only a playing about with the intellect on the surface of things, or, at best, an improved social satire. Pascal is in religious thinking what Æschylus is in religious drama; and the synthesis of early days—the best example for us is the Divine Comedy in which there is no questioning of fate or destiny—is falling to pieces, while there is nothing to take its place. The intellect tries to find a substitute, but even the intellectualists are most successful when they are most "old-fashioned": in the *Hippolytus* or the *Bacchæ*.

Though in the realm of thought, tragedy, if it is to come, must come at this period, art, other than literary, is still able to stem the tide of too much thinking. It is an extraordinary thing that Michelangelo, Raphael and Leonardo—the great trio—should have been great thinkers as well as artists, and that, side by side, with their science, their poetry, their ingenuity, they should have produced such work as the Last Judgment, the Sistine Madonna, and the Last Supper. A hundred years later it would have been impossible, but at the Renaissance in all civilisations such things are achieved. Pindar is already under the cloud, not a cloud of gloomy pessimism like Hesiod, but the cloud of real tragedy, when the conflict begins and men discover that the first impulse is not strong enough to carry them forward unthinking. Heraclitus prepares his public for Æschylus; the builders of the Ionic temples mark the new idea of space in its perfection, and the new worship of the gods; and the vase painters break away from the orientalising form and produce in the best black figured works something that is the reverse of tragic. There is a steady, unwavering advance to a climax which suffers no pause until think-

ing begins to attack the artist as well as the poet; it is truer than most people realise, that thinking is our curse, though it may also be a blessing and the highest weapon we have to find our way in a world that becomes more and more foreign to us.

Before the decline, art may be imperfect, may even be bad, but there is something healthy, convincing, all absorbing about it: during the decline, art is again imperfect, but there is something unhealthy, almost revolting about it. Nineteenth century art, in all civilisations, is definitely bad when compared with seventeenth, it exudes sentiment, "romanticism," weakness, doubt, pathos; so that we welcome the last effort of art as at least less unhealthy. We may hope that Western art will some day arrive at such a stage, so that Victorian Gothic and Woolworth styles may give place to a new phase, more barbaric, perhaps, but less offensive, of which our modern banks may be examples. That the original impulse will return is too much to expect, but there will be a sort of inspiration such as was seen in the Theban and Roman Empires. In the nineteenth century, we conquer real tragedy and put in its place the tragedy of scepti-

cism; in the twenty-second century, the scepticism will have ceased to matter and real tragedy will be meaningless.

It is a relief to turn from the prospect of the nineteenth century to the most magnificent period of all, and to trace the phase in some detail in each culture of which we have sufficient knowledge. The preparations are complete, the whole soul of the civilisation, growing upward with the soil and from the soil, has raised its monuments and the expression in stone of its reaction towards the powers it cannot understand; the onward movement ceases for a moment before it advances to its last great conquests. It has somehow to break away from the soil and build new monuments in the cities, in the atmosphere that will soon stifle the primitive exuberance; and here is the tragedy of the civilisation, a tragedy parallel to that we saw in the conflict of noble *versus* king or priest; the need to stand by itself and to base itself on the cold intellect in spite of the claim, still heard, of the other deeper part of man. But it finds splendid expression in the pure forms of that art which is most typical of the whole. Egypt from 1800-1700 B.C., Greece from 500-350 B.C., Arabia from A.D.

700-850 (in Byzantine, Italian and Moorish art), Europe from A.D. 1600-1750, all mark an advance which is quite clearly defined as the height. Fifty years more, and in each case the best is over, and in place of Phidias, Scopas, of Bach, Beethoven; just as we have Alexander in place of Pericles, Louis XVIII. in place of Louis XIV., and in place of the greatness of Puritan thought and philosophical originality, the dulness of rationalism and academic hair-splitting.

We can discuss Beethoven or Praxiteles much better than Phidias and Bach, less well than Strauss or Pergamene sculptors. We can recognise in the worse artists something of incipient flabbiness, something that is as much a relaxation of the strict form as the nineteenth century constitution is a relaxation in comparison with the seventeenth century. The further art declines the easier it is to talk. To find words to criticise Bach or Æschylus or XII. Dynasty sculpture is quite another thing. We can say that each is perfect of its kind. We cannot put perfection into words, but seem always to be defining "*ignotum per ignotius.*" In spite of modern artificers and babblers who would call formlessness the highest form, it is

in the time of utmost rigidity of form that all art rises to its climax. To put against the theorising self-complacency of our Alexandrine talkers, we have the undoubted success of the great observers of form; and it is only too likely that the "moderns" in our civilisation will perish as completely or be despised as wholeheartedly as those of other civilisations. The rigidity of the sonata or symphony form, of the Arabesque at its best, of a temple of Ictinus and Phidias, of a rock-tomb of Amenemhet, a rigidity that seems at times almost pushed to absurdity is in the end prepotent, while all the tiresome ants and hornets pass into forgetfulness. After all, it is in form that humanity is at its best, the racial type at its purest, the political tradition at its finest, the language at its most effective, rigid and yet elastic, when sculpture flourished at Athens and music in Europe. We shall never understand art unless we give up cold thinking and feel ourselves into what we study. Words as most of us can use them simply kill the appreciation of any work of art, we need the skill and genius of a poet to express the soul of it in words, to put a soul into the words.

Of the XII. Dynasty in Egypt, every one

of authority is agreed in regarding its art and achievement as the height of all that Egypt ever did; and that though the pyramids no longer appear to dazzle and amaze. Pyramids may impress us, but their appeal is massive and strange rather than artistic; they have not the power of the pylons—leading to the temples—with their rigid ordering of relief and column. Tutankhamen may create a stir by the modern luxury of his furniture, his household, and personal adornments; but it is the appeal of "modern" to "modern," not of art to artist, except where the forms or even the objects are borrowed from the days of Sesostris. The pyramid style is finished, and it cannot develop into a sort of musical architecture as does the eighteenth century in Europe; for such musical forms are foreign to Egypt. The temples and rock-tombs become the centre of concentration, and retain for ever the magnificent pillar forms with the flowered capital. Sculpture is developed and elevated, but it is in an architectural fashion; it expresses the dignity and greatness of the kings and their high officials, who are somehow conscious of their greatness. Colossal these may be sometimes, but it is seldom that we could confuse a XII.

Dynasty statue with a XIX., or with a V. The portraits, for, unlike Greece, Egypt represented actual living beings very early, may be distinguished by one or two safe tests. Apart from the difference in size, we may distinguish the XII. Dynasty king from the later by the more realistic type and by the greater thought it expresses; and we are supported in this by the fairly recent admission that many statues, asserted to be XVII. or XVIII. Dynasty, are now admitted universally to be XII.; and the test applies. The Pharaohs seem somehow to feel the burden of life, and the strain of its "directedness"; it becomes almost too much for one man to endure. Thus there is an intrusion of what we may call a religious element in the art, an element which is quite absent from Greek sculpture; the technical skill is in both cases equal, but instead of the calmness and dignity of the Parthenon we have chiefly an impression of energy and even tragedy. But though the whole of Egyptian life is bent upon death, and the way to death is the aim of life, there is a complete absence of pessimism and gloom: for tragedy is not pessimism. The painted reliefs, the wonderful depiction of natural forms on them, are full of an eager life,

without excess and without exaggeration. But painting is not the typical art of Egypt, and, in a way, the VI. Dynasty painting is more impressive, more convincing and pleasing than the XII.; the technique, too, is better and more vivid, so that the XII. Dynasty prepares the way for the latest phase, where most insistence is laid on small works of art, of little value, except as advertisements. Even newspaper photographs give an adequate impression of the difference between the ages, a difference as great as that between a Rembrandt and a modern impressionist, or between the Three Fates and the ornament that was in use in Pompeii. In an age, such as that of Sesostris III., when he triumphed over his nobles and vassals, we expect most attention to be devoted to greater things, and so we find the victory of the rock-tomb and pylon temple over the pyramid and painted relief; after the XII. Dynasty there is no further significance in the paintings, though naturally paintings were still produced. It is the age when even in Egypt there seems to be a new type of thought.

We are on firmer ground in Greece, partly because more is known about it, partly because more people know about it. We find here that

sculpture rises ultimately above all other forms of art and that temples become of secondary importance. Doric temples reached a high standard while sculptors were still struggling to get away from the absurdities of the Apollo of Tenea and the deadening influences of Egypt; but temple architecture remained of importance longer than in Europe—though less long than in Egypt—because they represent the fundamental symbol more adequately. At the time of the height of political form, architecture was still advancing and the Parthenon, the Theseion, and the temple of Nike Apteros are at the summit of temple building. The Erechtheion, perhaps in a way even the Nike Apteros temple, are just over the top of the slope; they give indications of the deterioration that came with the fully developed Corinthian order, the softening and relaxing of the strong and rigid Parthenon form. If Bach may be compared to the Parthenon, the Erechtheion is Beethoven. There is a break-up of the plastic tradition and the later temple builders have no longer the skill of expression that is the gift of the perfect genius; they begin to stammer. But as a background for the pediments and statuary of Phidias, of Pæonius, of

Calamis and Alcamenes, the Winged Victory, the Charioteer, the Theseus, even the Choiseul Gouffier Apollo—the Ionic temple was admirable, even if it could not in all its examples be as brilliant as the Parthenon, which is the supreme achievement of Greek art in this form.

Architecture at this time began to decline into the elegance of the Lysicrates Choragic monument, and continued its downward course. But sculpture is a different art. Though to some of us Phidias appears the finest sculptor in the world, there is little doubt that he had not yet reached the summit; that glory must be reserved for Polyclitus or Praxiteles. We are really not able to judge, because sculpture is not the art in which Western Europeans feel the highest satisfaction, and there is bound to be more difference of opinion. But in any case, the series of sculptors, which runs from Alcamenes to Lysippus, corresponds to the series of great musicians which ends with Mozart or perhaps Beethoven. Polyclitus had laid down the canon, though he departed from it himself. Praxiteles had definitely reached perfection of technique, though sometimes his skill led to weakness as it did with Mozart. Lysippus tried to return to the strict form and

tradition, in the same sort of way as Aristotle in philosophy reacted against the comparative weakness of Plato. In one respect Lysippus introduced a new and interesting phase, he was the first to make a habit of portraiture, a sign that the Greek spirit at its purest was fading away. Elpinice had been used as a model for Aphrodite, Aspasia too, and we have a portrait of Pericles; but it is only with the Sophocles and the work of Lysippus on Alexander that we have a real portraiture. This is no matter of chance or lack of technical dexterity, for it is as easy to make a portrait as a type; but somehow the Greek was opposed to the individual. There is no psychology about the best Greek statues; he would create a type willingly and magnificently; he would not, could not create an ego, an individual soul. There is one art in which the Romans surpassed the Greeks; there is nothing to compare with the splendid series of images of the Cæsars from Julius onwards; they are the first efforts at concentration on the face rather than the form.

Simultaneously with the decay of architecture came that of vase painting. A fifth century red-figured vase, like a fifth century coin

from almost any part of the Greek world, has, almost of necessity, something attractive and beautiful; the lines, the symmetry, the expression, are akin to those of the Parthenon, and it has been well said that a work of Euphronius is a Parthenon *in parvo*. We might add that one of Meidias is an Erechtheion *in parvo;* the change in vase shapes and in subject is almost parallel. But painting in Greece was no real painting, it was sculpture on a painted surface—in the same sort of way as Egyptian sculpture is architecture, not sculpture. It never produced a background or foreground, never used any but a very few traditional colours.

Of Europe we need mention little except the main principles and the chief names. Once we have grasped how art develops and what is the fundamental symbol of Europe, we can work out the whole details for ourselves; there are necessarily some apparent exceptions and contradictions, but further examination will find that they are either unimportant or the result of a momentary distortion. Thus sculpture must be inadequate for a European, yet we have Michelangelo to deal with; architecture is superseded, yet we have St. Paul's and

Rococo; painting insists on the colours that give the impression of distance, yet we have the pre-Raphaelites. Such facts are of little importance to the main statement of the development; others there are more difficult to explain, but as far as European art is concerned there are no such great exceptions as, for instance, in Chinese art of the seventh century A.D. and later.

Gothic architecture, as we have said, had fulfilled itself by about 1400; it had found various forms lying to hand—the pure Saxon, the mixed Arabian and Classical in Burgundy, the types exemplified in Ravenna, Milan, Aix-la-Chapelle. But all of them in the end reached similar forms, gave expression to the same feeling of space, and became integral parts of one whole style, which was intimately connected with the culture. By 1400, in the Western area there are no varying styles, only one pure unconscious manner of talking in stone. After 1500 the impulse was losing its force, so that thenceforward varying styles appeared, but all of them still with the same basic feeling. Seventeenth century Baroque, even in the form in which it spread over South America with the Jesuits, led on to eighteenth

century in a direct line and all over the area; but the chief quality about all of it is that it ceases to be architectural, unless it also ceases to be artistic at all. It may have broken away from the purest Gothic style, but it has broken away from all style and become either dead or musical. The country mansions in England with their parks and avenues, the country houses of the Continent, Versailles, Sans Souci, are still splendid, but the greater part of the buildings are dead. Form has broken up either into a sort of budding "romanticism" or it has hardened into death.

Stone does not lend itself satisfactorily to the fundamental symbol of Western Europe; it will not allow the soul to escape sufficiently from solid matter and the concrete bonds. A Western physicist is driven to break up matter more and more until he cannot define it as anything but points of tension in a magnetic field, or else as points of nothingness. A Greek, on the contrary, took his atoms to be solid masses, even if infinitely small. Similarly, in contrast to the Greek artist who took to sculpture, the Western artist took first to painting, where he could give more real expression to the feeling which the physicist has inherited

from him, and finally to music, where the parallel between the artist and physicist is still closer. Painting appealed to the Western artist almost from the beginning, not on the restricted space of a vase but almost immediately on the comparatively wide areas of fresco or vaulting, as in the case of Giotto. The fresco remained the greatest work of Greek painting, though lost to us; Europe dropped it very soon, and took either to the painting of the cathedral vaultings, or to still more definitely Western forms, in the Madonnas and kindred portrait painting. But there was no limit to the number of colours the artist employed and the more a colour would give him the chance of breaking up the distances, of attracting the eye to the infinite, to the background, the more eagerly he welcomed it. It would be instructive to write a work on the use of colours in various civilisations, not only the number of them, but the quality. To contrast Egyptian, Greek, Arabian and European, with Spengler's theory before one, is to obtain something like a real insight into the differences of the civilisations.

But even painting in its Western form was not enough. All the great artists tried their

hand at it, all, though in different forms, with the same feeling; the Renaissance with its over-insistence on the classical looked as if it might thwart the natural development and force men back to sculpture and classical forms, but even the Florentine school, where the classical example was strongest, refused to obey and continued its course; the Venetians followed, and the Dutch produced on their own account a type of painting, particularly of secular portrait painting, which marks almost the highest point of Western work. In the end colours became too weak for the task, and etching exerted its influence over men like Holbein and Van Dyck, so that their portraits become almost lost in the infinite lines which recall the etchings of Rembrandt.

The infinite lines were too much for the eye and the mind to cope with and after 1660 all artists of importance turned to music, where there was more chance of discarding the ever-present influences of matter. In music the material is as unearthly as it can possibly be.

Plato had been unable to imagine any music save that which had a definite concrete, emotional effect, and he therefore barred from his ideal state all music except hymns and psalms.

Lydian, Ionian and other modes seemed to him to be effeminating or exhausting. Thereby he tells us what Greek music was like. We could, of course, guess for ourselves and we should know that the music would be more or less on the level of the "Marche Militaire," with somewhat less swing and energy about it. Nothing could be further removed from it than Western music; starting from church music, Gregorian plainsong and the like, it very soon developed a quality of its own, particularly in organ music, for the organ is at that time the best means of expression of the Western soul. After the time of Palestrina, Stradella, Orlando Lasso, there comes the beginning of the great period of music; the invention of a large number of instruments—clavicord, harpsichord, spinet, with the multitudinous violas d'amour, da gamba, violins, violone—coincided with the invention of a large number of new forms, chief among which were the concerto, which, through the concerto grosso, became the symphony, the sonata and the string quartet. With the realisation of these forms, and the form is at bottom the same in all, Western music reached its highest and most rigid state; these forms had

been the natural development, they had happened as it were in absent-mindedness. After this time there are no new forms; nothing but extensions of the old, or romantic, music. But there was nothing more to say after the days of Brahms and Wagner; even they are far from the perfection of 100 years earlier. They are nineteenth century. It is in the fugue and in strict counterpoint that Western music finds its most satisfying expression, and all the more rigid forms are developed on those lines, and it is by these means that the musician can get the furthest away from the every-day things. Strictly, there is no emotion in Western music, if we accept the word emotion in its ordinary sense. That there is emotion in Bach, every one must admit who has heard the "Largo of the Concerto" for two violins in D minor; but there is an impassable gulf between that and the emotion of Wagner at his worst. The one is transcendent, the other gross; Bach felt within him the metaphysical urge of the civilisation, Wagner always tended to express his petty personal emotions. There is no question about the spirituality of real music, it is the harmonious and spontaneous expression of something that is beyond the regions of the

spiritual or unspiritual. It must be and it is. It is perhaps illustrative of Western music that Beethoven wrote his finest works, those which almost break the form, when he was deaf.

To our "modern" musicians all this is untrue or meaningless. Strauss, in a way typical of them, said that he hoped the day would come when he could express the fact of a teaspoon in music, and showed that the true spirit of Western music had gone out of him, and that to call him even "Richard the Second" was an exaggerated compliment. Music, we must assert dogmatically, was not meant for the expression of teaspoons, any more than it was meant for the expression of "Gardens under the Rain or Games of the Waters!" These composers retrograde, inevitably we may agree, to the level of Greek music, and it is possible that to-day the performance of Greek music might be welcomed as the appearance of a new style, though in the days of the climax it would have sounded nonsense to any one who had any feelings of music. It is at the height of a culture that the typical form of art reaches its purest; after that it becomes less distinct and less distinctive. Arts become "universal" just as truths become "absolute."

Thus there may be some resemblance between a painting at Pompeii and a modern landscapist; there could be none between a fresco of Polygnotus and a Raphael. There is more resemblance between jazz and African extra-cultural music than between Handel—even at his worst—and jazz. In the days of Gainsborough and Reynolds there was never any doubt that the paintings were Western, but twentieth century work, if it does not deliberately go to the negro, is about as valueless as if it did. But equally absurd were the Morris, Rossetti, Burne-Jones school, who thought that great artistic creation might be achieved by going back to the days before Raphael; the pre-Raphaelites, in the strict chronological sense, had not come to the climax of their art and had not painted what was most valuable in Western work, so that the pre-Raphaelite school were trying to put the clock back and dismiss all that had been achieved by painters since the sixteenth century. But there is no quality about them. Where we might still do something is in black and white designing or in the illustrating of books. C. S. Ricketts and Francis Crease do far better work than all the expressionists and symbolists, and the Johns

and Orpens do not really count. Nor does any sculptor since the days of Michelangelo; if we make a list of the great names of Europe since then, we shall find many painters, musicians, mathematicians, scientists, statesmen, soldiers, but barely a single sculptor, and the reason is that there is no real possibility of valuable expression, whether in stone or bronze.

Most of us know something about modern art and have seen pictures of Greek and Egyptian, but of Arabian we have probably seen very little, and of its development know nothing. For Arabian, as much as for Greek, pictures are necessary, and they are not available, except of difficult access and in small quantities. But we shall be able to make our own way through the thickets when we have realised the fundamental symbol of Arabia and remembered that for the first centuries the course is abnormal. A few definite points in the history of the art may be given. St. Sophia is the example that is best known and we can seize hold of it as the key; it was built just before the height of Arabian art, but at the time of the climax of architecture. After that the development is somewhat parallel to that

of Egypt, for architecture remains in a way the typical Arabian art, though it is not the architectural but the ornamental forms that are more important. By the eighth century the culture had spread as far as the Straits of Gibraltar and Bagdad, and the arabesque and mosaic are most expressive and also most "rigid," if we may use such a word of the ornamentation. For once, usage has been right, and has given the name arabesque to what is probably the most typical form of Arabian art; what it did not realise was that the form was typical, not merely of Arabia as a geographical or ethnographical term, but of the whole of the culture which Spengler has named Arabian. It is perhaps unfortunate that the descent of the arabesque can be traced so clearly, for the result is that it is claimed as a purely classical form; but why did the acanthus motif remain for so long without development and then suddenly break away in spirit at the time of the pseudo-morphosis? In late Roman capitals it is often difficult to say whether they are still classical or already Arabian; as in some of the latest buildings at Rome, *e.g.*, in S. Paolo fuori le Mura, it is impossible to call them classical, and they are not yet Arabian.

Our troubles in dealing with Arabia are increased by the fact that Byzantium was one of its centres, and at Byzantium the language in use was Greek. We have, therefore, thought of Greek culture as extending down to the days of Psellus, of Moses Maimonides, and others; but if it were not that literature gives superficially the least indication of a change of spirit, we should have seen long ago that by A.D. 300 all traces of the classical had gone, not merely from politics in the Diocletianic reforms, but in all branches of art. If we keep our eyes open, we shall see traces of the growth of architecture at Jerusalem, at Ctesiphon, Petra and Baalbek: then we can keep hold of what we have and clear up the tangle of later forms. The arabesque is our main thread, and with that we can escape a good many mazes. We shall feel that the later additions to the Herodic Jerusalem are well on the way to St. Sophia, and that St. Sophia is in the direct line with the whole Eastern as well as Western Arabian culture. We shall even be disposed to believe that the temple of Ananda at Pagan, in Burma, was built under the influence of Arabian culture; for though it is nominally Buddhistic, it is as far removed as possible from

the pure Indian Stupas and Dhobas, and with it we shall class the Taj Mahal as the very latest product of Arabian art. We shall be able to put the buildings of Spain and North Africa—the Alhambra is the most famous instance—in their proper place, and shall be saved the blunders of those who would call St. Sophia the climax of Christian art, as if it were something opposed to Mohammedan. If it were indeed so, the Mohammedans were amazingly successful in not merely imitating but assimilating Christian style. St. Sophia is obviously the first shaking free of pure Arabian architecture, and it is natural that it should arise just there, in the same way that literature developed in Spain in the fifteenth century, along with its civilisational importance. From the time of St. Sophia to that of the Taj Mahal, is the development of one and the same style; and we can see examples of it even in such purely Christian churches as St. Ambrose in Milan, and St. Maria at Venice. St. Sophia gives us the first clear instance of the specifically Arabian features—the arabesque becoming more and more immaterial, whether as decoration for the capital or for the arch above, the highly-polished columns of porphyry, the column and arch forming a single whole, the mosaics

with gold backgrounds, the domed roof quite unclassical in spirit, and the internal decoration of the dome. All these features correspond to the dominating architectural quality in Egypt, on frieze and temple and rock-tomb, to sculpture and sculptural painting and building in Greece, to painting and music in Europe. The end of the creative period comes with the Arabian nineteenth century in about 1100.

Though we have traced the development of art in each civilisation only to the nineteenth century, except for a casual mention of later epochs, it would be wrong to leave the impression that art stops there for good. There is a further manifestation of it in the Hellenistic and romantic age, which endures often as far as the twenty-first century; but it is a period of general decline, however much individual artists may contribute momentarily. All the faults we mentioned as introducing the nineteenth century are exaggerated; there is a refusal to abide by strictness of form, to observe any form at all; emotion becomes predominant, subjectivism penetrates; impersonality vanishes, and art can do little but lisp and stammer and roar about vain nothings. Brahms and Wagner give way to Strauss and Debussy, the Pergamene altar and the Laocoon

to "Antioch" and the Elder Agrippina. It is vain to hope to stem the tide, we should do better to recognise the inevitable and do our best within those bounds. The nineteenth centuries—we may call them such after the European, though even that lasts from 1789 till about 1950—draw down the curtain on all art which has metaphysical significance. The civilisation is no longer in form, and the artists, who feel the desire to create, can find no true form in which to express themselves. Even the closing years of the civilisation, which bring a little of interest, even of value, cannot give us any art except architecture and occasionally literature. The former, which was the beginning and promise of what was to come, is now the messenger of death. The great reptiles died out when they had reached monster forms, and so a civilisation, too, dies when it has produced skyscrapers. For ourselves, we can only hope that we shall not be reduced to the level of Rameses, of Nabonidus, of the Romans, and find ourselves so helpless that we cannot do more than steal old works and add a new signature, or else can do nothing but copy —and copy, as the Romans did in the Athena Varvakeion!

CHAPTER VI

NINETEENTH CENTURY

PRACTICALLY all popular ideas of culture and civilisation are derived from a very narrow outlook on history. A human being's experience is limited to seventy years on this planet, but the lessons to be derived from a period even as short as this seem to be too much for most people to grasp. The political lessons of our youth are forgotten in our prime, and the weariness of the nation after such a struggle as that which ended in 1918, gives way to a longing for excitement and a prepossession in favour of another experience of the benefits which a nation can secure by war. Tennyson's "long, long canker of peace," only lasted for forty years. It is not surprising therefore, that a whole philosophy of history should be built up on the insecure foundation of the facts of a hundred years. The achievements of the present age have given rise to an idea of the progressive development of civilisation and to a hope for the future which is probably un-

justified. The idea of progress undoubtedly has some foundation in fact, but not in the way which is usually supposed. The period from 1780 to the present day, which for the sake of convenience we may call the nineteenth century, is a great advance on all previous stages, but it does not follow, therefore, that it is the last point so far reached in an ascending line. On the contrary, it appears the peak of a mountain beyond which lies the descent on the other side, or the topmost point of a curve with a long rise behind and a descent before. Such, at least, were previous periods in previous civilisations. For the moment, there is a dazzled vision to greater and greater heights, but for the moment only; after, there is disillusionment and disappointment.

In Western Europe the eighteenth century had already shown a new tendency in the diffusion of its ideas over the educated portion of the culture. The scepticism of Hume and Gibbon is not unique; it is merely typical; and the destructive criticism of Voltaire was popular among those who were afterwards guillotined, because the crowd had appreciated the fact that they were an unnecessary nuisance. But with the commencement of the new period

these diffused ideas adopt a strikingly different form. Marvin has called the nineteenth century the century of hope, and so it is, although in a sense different from that which he imagined. Eighteenth century critical ideas were academic and impracticable in the sense that they were not necessarily to be put into practice; the nineteenth century idea is more than an idea, it is an ideal. It contains within itself most of the force of a religion, it is a creed for which many are willing to die. And if it is objected that this phenomenon is due to the ignorance of those who come under the influence of the ideas, the answer can readily be found in the instance of J. S. Mill, and his religious fervour in his advocacy of Liberty. In fact, in politics and partially in religion and philosophy, the nineteenth century is the great age of intellectual ideals and in this sense it must begin with the Liberty, Fraternity, and Equality, of the French Revolution.

Each of these ideals, liberty, fraternity and equality, has its own shade of meaning, and runs through a well-defined course, until, like one of the Central Asian rivers, it is lost in the sand and marshes of a declining civilisation. Liberty, at first, seems to mean popular control

of the government, and, as such, was secured by the French in 1793 and the English in 1832. This conception of liberty leads to the democratic struggles during the century, and to their almost complete success at the end of the war in 1918. The conception, however, is inadequate. On the one hand, popular control may leave the question of national independence still unsolved, and nationality forms the second great question of the nineteenth century. On the other hand, real liberty is found to be endangered as much by popular government as by absolute monarchy, and a struggle takes place to vindicate the right of the individual to his own free development as opposed to governmental interference. The question has been fought out in politics and in philosophy, and has ended in the same way in both theatres of war. T. H. Green and the Liberal party brought in the government to create the possibility of liberty, and the future of the ideal, if any, lies with Socialism. Equality has had a similar, if less complicated history. At first, the ideal merely had the significance of equality for all men under the law, and, as such, was secured by France during the Revolution. Politically, it implies universal

suffrage, including woman suffrage as Bentham pointed out, and the struggle for the ideal in this sense lasted in England from 1832 to 1918. But here again, in its early form, the ideal is found to be inadequate. Equality cannot be secured without equality of opportunity, and in a world governed by chance, this can be realised only by organisation and control; and then only partially. Saint-Simon and Fourier and Robert Owen are evidences of the rapid realisation of this fact after the French Revolution. The general spread of Socialism and Communism is based on the ideal of equality. The two ideals then end at the same point. Like two streams they become merged in one river, and if equality seems more obviously the basis of the Socialist movement, the ideal of liberty is certainly its motive force.

The ideal of fraternity belongs to a totally different order of ideas. It has nothing to do with practical politics, but very much to do with the attitude of mind which affects politics. In the French Revolution it is merely a variant of equality, and this statement may be predicated of its influence on Socialism. Revolutionists and Socialists alike have placed the ideal in the forefront of their battle line, not in

order to inspire their own actions, but to affect those of other people and to create conscientious scruples in the minds of their opponents. The French and Russian Revolutions have been, on the whole, somewhat inadequate expositions of brotherly love. There is, however, in the word fraternity the germ of the highest ideal of all. In the nineteenth century, religion tends towards ethics and philosophy towards the way of life. The scepticism of the eighteenth century has, practically speaking, completed its work on religion. Orthodox ideas of God, atonement and sacraments have failed to pass the test of the critical intellect, and become less and less tenable for the educated classes. Religion has to stand or fall by ethical standards. The righteous, angry, jealous God of the Reformation turns into the God is Love of St. John, and the two important Commandments are usually interpreted, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself and thy God if thou canst believe in him." Philosophy in the nineteenth century has a harder task in front of it. The Utilitarian who believed in the greatest happiness of the greatest number and in the individual attempt to obtain the individual's happiness might seem to

be purely selfish. He could, nevertheless, be forced into the position that true happiness could only be reached by unselfishness, even if it was selfish unselfishness. This attitude is typical of the age. Goethe's Faust reaches happiness in the end through unselfishness and service of others. Browning's Paracelsus reaches the conclusion that the goal of the individual is love and power for the sake of love. Mazzini saw in Italian nationality the possibility of a great service to humanity. The climax of the nineteenth century ideal, which in our age has been preached and talked about *ad nauseam,* is reached in the words, "The perfect law of liberty, love and do what thou wilt," and Christianity as far as intelligence is concerned rests its appeal on the ethical standards of its founder and not on its theories of the directing forces of the universe.

This is an ideal and practice falls short of it. Nevertheless, along with the other sides of national and cultural life, from the beginning of the nineteenth century there runs a steady flow of humanitarian feeling, which has expressed itself in England and afterwards over the whole area of the civilisation. The beginning of the period saw the agitation against

slavery and the almost equally famous agitation against the White Slavery in the factories. It was a period of the most humane, even if the most economically pernicious, administration of the Poor Law, and of the revision of the penal code. After 1832 the abolition of slavery was carried out in the British Empire at considerable expense to the British taxpayer, and the greatest Factory Act of all was passed with the aid of the philanthropic Lord Shaftesbury. From 1867 onwards, the humanitarian movement in its political aspect is a part of normal politics, and elsewhere endless organisations spread their activities in endless directions, and appeals from them for aid are as numerous as money-lenders' circulars in the breakfast postbag. The sentiment that it is your business to interfere if some one else is suffering, whether it be in Tokio, Messina or Valparaiso, or even if it is the case of the ill-treatment of a horse or a dog, is a nineteenth century attitude. Since the war the vast sums of money spent by America in relief expeditions to places which most Americans have hardly heard of and of whose positions they are quite ignorant, shows that the sentiment is as strong as ever, and half the force behind the

League of Nations is due to the feeling of sympathy and the desire to avoid suffering.

The factor which most obviously differentiates the period after 1789 from other periods is the advance of theoretical and applied science. The date 1789 itself occurs after the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, but before the extension of this great economic change had covered England with railways, factories and towns. The country has been completely changed in appearance by machinery and electricity and other methods of employing natural forces, until the easy-going atmosphere of the eighteenth century is as far away from us as the Middle Ages or as Greece in 500 B.C. The chemical and physical processes employed in industry are even more remarkable in their extraordinary subtlety and abstruseness from the point of view of the layman, and apparently every product is the result of factors which are incomprehensible except to those who are actually specialists in their own trade. The great structure of national and international trade is bound together by a financial and banking system in itself an incomprehensible mystery periodically expounded by its high priests, who are easily able

to demonstrate its incomprehensibility by differing from each other on all possible occasions. Theoretical science is still more abstruse and difficult. This has been the great age of biology and its kindred subjects, the facts of which have formed the basis of a fiercely contested philosophy. The interpretation of the facts is indeed remarkably dubious, but the knowledge of them continually increases, and magnificent scientific experiments are able to demonstrate man's control over living matter, even if it can be put to no practical purpose. This is also the great age of chemical investigation, which is more often useful in applied science. These two sciences are mainly the special products of the period and so are more difficult tests with which to appraise the achievements of other civilisations. But the mathematical sciences are typical of all civilisations. Here also our achievements have been great. Final mathematics have appeared. Geometry has passed into metageometries, and with Einstein Newton has been superseded. Physics, from the discovery of the atomic table to radiation, and the present knowledge of the atom and its electrons, has perhaps surpassed all other sciences in the greatness of the con-

ceptions which have been added to human thought.

The European living in the atmosphere of ideals and in physical contact with the results of science can undoubtedly look down on the previous ages of his own culture; but, on the other hand, so could the Greek of 280-120 B.C. or the Arabian of A.D. 950-1100. Ideals may be the monopoly of one age in a civilisation, but they are not the monopoly of one civilisation. Although in Greece it is difficult to trace the development of liberty, fraternity and equality through their various stages, there is clear evidence that the ideals existed with considerable vigour, and in spite of the accumulated rubbish of 2,000 years, specimens of every species may be excavated. Diogenes the Cynic, the advocate of a return to Nature, was an individualist of the J. S. Mill type. He started from the postulate of the self-sufficiency of the individual; the one thing that really belonged to the individual was his own thoughts and the best thing was their expansion. In the decay of Greek political life he did not produce theories of government as did Mill; for that, stable and rational governmental systems would have been needed, and

they did not exist in the Greek world (nor for the matter of that did they in Europe of the nineteenth century except in England). Diogenes turned within to secure his freedom. He dismissed the Aristotelian view of the necessity of the state for the perfection of the individual, for he held that the individual could attain perfection without surrendering himself to the membership of a city. Liberty alone was necessary for individual development, and the possibility of development existed in every man. Diogenes naturally went on to assert the equality of individuals and the artificiality of slavery. All men were equal in spite of colour, race or nationality, and all were or should be citizens of the world. Similarly, the Stoic conception of reason led to ideas of both liberty and equality; because reason existed in each individual as a fragment of the cosmic reason, and men should regard one another as fellow citizens and demesmen, and "there should be one life, one order, as of a single flock on a common pasture." These ideas led, naturally, to Socialism and Communism in theory and even in practice. During the Greco-Roman nineteenth century there were fully-fledged Communistic experiments, and there were the So-

cialistic proposals of Tiberius and Gaius Gracchus, directly inspired by their Stoic teacher, Blossius. Along with these two ideals goes also the third. The humanitarian movement is represented by the attack on slavery, and the higher ideal of fraternity is nowhere better developed than by the Stoics. To them the most divine kind of virtue was that of helping humanity. To love and help humanity is according to Stoic doctrine the very essence of God. This doctrine is magnificently expressed by Pliny: "God is the helping of man by man and that is the way to eternal glory."

The Greek, too, was in contact with science. It is the age of Alexandria, itself a monument of engineering and architectural skill, the age of Euclid, Apollonius, Eratosthenes and Manetho. Chemistry and biology are largely outside the range of Greek thought, but in the mathematical sciences they reached a proficiency which, if not as high as that of our nineteenth century, is at least sufficient to entitle them to very considerable respect. Eratosthenes made reasonable approaches to an accurate measurement of the earth; he solved the problem of two mean proportionals; he determined the interval between the tropics.

Apollonius wrote a treatise on conic sections. Some of the work of Hipparchus was employed by Newton, and the Ptolemaic system based on Alexandrine theories maintained its ground as the exponent of a theory of the universe dominant in Europe for 1,700 years. A greater name than all is that of Archimedes, whose exploits at the siege of Syracuse made him almost a mythical hero. Mirrors which burned ships, catapults, all of them no doubt vastly exaggerated, were employed to harass the Romans. Of more peaceful inventions he numbered about forty, including a screw pump and a hydraulic organ. He laid the foundations of hydrostatics, demonstrated the true mathematical theory of the lever, and determined the ratio of the radius to the circumference of a circle correctly up to three decimal points. He was undoubtedly an intellectual giant, but he was not the only person to apply science to practical purposes; for Hero of Alexandria invented the steam engine, although it was apparently considered a curiosity and kept in a museum instead of running about the country on rails as European steam engines are supposed to do.

The Arabian was too much dominated by

his religion to have free scope for intellectual ideals, although in religion something very like liberty and fraternity may be found, and there were communistic sects in Bagdad preaching equality in the twelfth century. But the Arabian mind was even freer than the Greek to turn to science, and the period from A.D. 950-1100 is a magnificent record of scientific achievement. From Spain to Persia, from Cordova to Bagdad, the scientific attitude was spread over the Arabian world. The greatest of all the scientists is perhaps Alhazan. He was the first to show that rays of light issue from external objects and not from the eye. He determined that the retina was the seat of vision, and that the impressions made by light upon it are conveyed along the optic nerve to the brain. Further, he discovered or realised the fact of the curve of refraction for waves of light which enter our atmosphere, and applied the principles on which it acted to the determination of the height of atmosphere. He may have been responsible for the book of "The Balance of Wisdom," which sets forth the connection between the weight of the atmosphere and its increasing density, and applies the doctrine of the centre of gravity to

the investigation of balances. Tables of specific gravity as given by Alhazan, approach closely to those of our own age, and, in the case of mercury, were more accurate than those in use until quite recently. In a kind of way he anticipated the idea of natural evolution, of the progressive forms of animal development leading up to man. Along with Alhazan there is a great cloud of witnesses to Arabian science, both theoretical and applied. Averroes was responsible for the discovery of spots on the sun. Rhazes, Alabbas, and Albeithar wrote fine treatises on botany. Abu Othman wrote on zoology. Avenzoar was the authority on pharmacy. Ebn Junis employed the pendulum for the measurement of time. There is no end to the list of names, and the application of scientific method for breeding horses and sheep, and the introduction into Europe of rice, sugar and cotton, show how widespread was the diffusion of that atmosphere which we think of as purely Western European. Street lighting and water supplies in Cordova were infinitely better than those of London in the eighteenth century.

Greece, Arabia and Western Europe are similar in that they produced a scientific epoch,

the results of which are sufficiently exciting to be remembered. The science of China and India was unimportant. There are traces in China, such as the invention of iron and a treatise on medicine, which perhaps forecasts the idea of the circulation of the blood, that a scientific attitude was in existence. But they are merely traces. On the other hand, the Chinese and Hindus produced a series of philosophical ideas in which many of the nineteenth century features are visible and some of them most strikingly exemplified. Liberty to the Hindu had nothing to do with government. It meant a way of escape from the evils of existence. Equality was not equality under the law or equality of opportunity, but equality in the universal sense that all were without exception part of the universal spirit. Fraternity was to be found in the common way of escape and the destruction of individual feelings of selfishness, if not in pure unselfishness. And so there exists a curious similarity between the attitude of Buddha, who sought a way of escape, not only for himself, but for everybody, and not because his own life was unhappy, but because the lives of others were unhappy, and the attitude of mod-

ern Christianity. Humanitarianism is seen in its extreme form in the religion of the Jains, who refused to take the life of even the most insignificant and objectionable of living creatures. On the other hand, the idea of equality seems to be of no importance in China. The fundamental spirit of the culture produces a social spirit so strong that it seems to be difficult to conceive of the individual in rivalry with other individuals. The attitude of Aristotle that man can only secure his fullest expression in society, is fully adopted and is strengthened by the fact that it is taken for granted that there are other relationships also, such as those of the family. Confucius, in fact, seems to have taught that a human being's first duty was to his family, and only his second to his government. Yang Chu, however, was individualist and utilitarian in spirit, and taught that the pursuit of pleasure was the only sensible objective for a human being. But practically all Chinese thought is social. Lao Tse produced the doctrine of the Right Life, the way of the right-minded man, who could find freedom in conquering himself. He is the Cynic of China, the philosopher who could dispense with government, because,

after all, government does not get rid of violence and disorder, and who could dispense with learning because bad men made use of mental training for their evil actions. Virtue and freedom can only be secured by looking within and overcoming the hopes and fears of ordinary mortals. This was the teaching of Lao Tse and Chuang Tzu, along with a good deal of mystical paraphernalia which was intended to describe the best way of self-culture. Fraternity is a typically Chinese ideal, and is the spirit at the back of Confucius and Moh Ti. The philosophy of Confucius is purely social ethics. Virtue apparently meant the fulfilment of social obligations, filial piety and loyalty to the emperor, duty to fellow human beings. State and family were necessary to happiness, and had to be supported by power and the possibility of punishment, for humanity, though good, was liable to err, and must be held in check. As a philosopher, however, his common sense got the better of his idealism, and he is essentially practical and useful as is T. H. Green. Moh Ti's protest against individual selfishness is more idealistic. Moh Ti, too, recognises the social obligations, but, rising above them, points out that mutual

love would cure all difficulties. If feudal states would leave one another alone, families cease to quarrel, and thieves cease to steal, while sovereign and subject lived on terms of benevolence, and fathers and sons on terms of filial piety, then, indeed, would China be well-governed. But even Moh Ti talks about empires and states and families without realising that if human beings were completely unselfish, none of these social forms would be necessary or possible. The question of the real nature of man, whether good or evil, and of the restraint which it was necessary to impose on him, occupied the philosophers, Mencius, Kao and Hsun Tzu, and is discussed from a common-sense attitude, which is unfortunately more typical of China than of Europe.

Religion in the nineteenth centuries of the great civilisations takes on peculiar forms. The ethical feeling which teaches service to humanity may base itself on religion, but it is not truly religious in spirit, and a spirit of fraternity does not depend on a god or an unseen world for its validity. Confucius, who, though he was a founder of religion, was so in his own despite, has nothing to say about gods or a future state. Buddhism, similarly,

is a way of life, in which gods and immortality, though they may exist, fade into obscurity, while all attention is focussed on the individual and the law by which the destiny of the individual is decided. But this is not religion. Any true religion is based on some pretended or genuine perceptive power which transcends reason and fact alike, and, in the nineteenth centuries, is found elsewhere. Underneath the ethical systems and the modernist treatment of dogma, there exist in Europe to-day two movements. There is the old traditional force of Catholicism, which, instead of dying, has probably increased its power in the last fifty years, and, in England, has been reinforced by those who may be called the Anglo-Catholics. Confucianism in China, Buddhism in India, and Stoicism in Greece, were in their pure forms the expression of an intellectual side of civilisation, which makes its voice heard to-day in the better London weeklies, although the letter columns of a local paper tell a very different and much truer story of popular beliefs. All the greater thought has, in the end, been submerged in the religious superstitions of the masses, and though the transformation of these noble ideas into forms and ceremonies for the

propitiation of deities is the work of a later period, the traditional type of religion is existing powerfully all the time. However lofty the superstructure of ideals may be, it is only a flimsy structure after all. Though it lasts in some form or other for a long period, its real influence is purely temporary. In addition to what we call traditionalism, there is another and very remarkable side to nineteenth century religion. It is the age of a collection of more or less esoteric creeds and practices, which may very loosely be termed mysticism if such diverse phenomena as Christian science, theosophy, anthroposophy, spiritualism and true mysticism can be combined at all. But they are united in at least one point. They all attempt to secure knowledge of the universe by methods which transcend the senses and are unknown to science, and they give information procured by those methods, which is beyond anything obtainable by the ordinary human intelligence. This phenomenon is typical of the period in all the civilisations of which we have any adequate knowledge. The foundation of theosophy was laid in India, probably by Pantajali's Yoga, which aimed at suppressing the functions of the mind in order

to make possible the perception of the supersensible by the spirit. Curious methods were employed, such as that of repeating the magic word "om" indefinitely, a practice which is continued to-day, and does presumably succeed in boring the mind sufficiently to reduce its consciousness. What Pantajali perceived was strikingly similar to the revelations of Buddha, but he is only important to us as an example of this type of experience in India. In Greece nearly all the Stoics fell down and worshipped the astrology of the Chaldæans, of which the foremost exponent was that Berossus, who set up a school at Cos. Combined with astrology and astrological gods an unlimited belief in prophecy and divination and some kind of mediumistic speech and clairvoyance arose, of which there are indubitable traces in the New Testament. Arabia went in wholeheartedly for mysticism, the characteristic idea of which has dominated Persian poetry ever since. The cardinal doctrine was that of unification; that is to say, nothing truly exists except God. Consequently all phenomena are fleeting shows of the one reality, truth is only to be found within, heaven and hell are subjective, and the highest knowledge consists

in unconsciousness or ecstasy. All creeds are pale shadows of one religion.

"None of the two and seventy sects with mine,
Agrees with any faith but love divine.
Saint, sinner, true believer, infidel,
All aim at thee; away with name and sign."

The rationalistic nineteenth century laughs at the mystical experience as a recrudescence of superstition. But the Riddles of the Sphinx are insoluble by scientific methods and the mystic does follow a path different from those which lead the scientist to his negative conclusions. At least one-half of the nineteenth century spirit is a desire for truth and the response of science is definitely inadequate. Far as it can go, it reaches no clear conclusions, and its progress only opens up new problems. The mystic tries his own peculiar bunch of keys on the door, and the trouble perhaps is the extraordinarily discrepant accounts of what lies on the other side rather than that the door fails to open.

With all its ideals, its religion, its philosophy, and its science, it is impossible to describe in a phrase the spirit of the nineteenth century. Undoubtedly one of its most striking features

is its intellectual effort to understand humanity. This is most evident in our literature. "Poetry," said Arnold, "is a criticism of life," and nineteenth century literature is criticism of humanity. The Shakespearean and Æschylean types of literature deal with human beings as all great literature must, but they are dramas in which human passions and desires play a part in rather than comprise the whole. "Character is destiny" is a phrase which, though largely inaccurate, does describe a quality of Shakespeare, whose magnificent tragedies derive their interest, not from the development of the character itself, but from the results of the character on the action of the play. In the nineteenth century, the interest is centred definitely on the characters and the lives they lead. The nineteenth century English novel passes through certain well-marked stages, and the essential characteristics of each of these stages may be found in the Alexandrine literature of the period from 300-150 B.C., and some of them in Arabia. In the Romantic stage, there are the conventions of a hero, of heroical adventures and of a hero's reward, usually a heroine. The world, by a poetic fiction, is conceived of as a splendid place, in

which an overruling providence metes out justice to the good and the bad, according to their deserts, even if the fight is fierce, the warfare long, and wickedness may seem to triumph for a season. For a world which cannot face facts, this convention has its uses, yet in Scott and Dickens, the writers who are most typically romantic, the greatest interest is found in the subordinate figures, in whom imagination and skill in character-drawing have free play. The psychological novel, of which Meredith is the great exponent, depends solely on character for interest, and aims at supreme accuracy of delineation, while realism takes character and life, and attempts to describe both as they are. Realism, in the literary sense, is rather French than English, but in England, the last great Victorian, Hardy, adopts its spirit, though not its methods, and deliberately attempts to describe the facts of certain aspects of life. He tries "to deal unaffectedly with the fret and fever, derision and disaster that may press in the wake of the strongest passions known to humanity; to tell without any mincing of words of a deadly war waged with the old apostolic desperation between flesh and spirit." Romance, psychology and realism, all deal

with humanity, and press towards a point of accuracy, in fact, towards the truth of human experience on the earth. But, if that is true of Europe, it is also true of Greece, although the Greek novel is in poetry and deals with the old myths. The Alexandrians, too, produced romances, and psychological and realistic studies. The question-mark about humanity affected them as well, and the spirit of the Greek nineteenth century is the same as that of Europe. Similar, also, was that of Arabia, where the romances in song and story produced a whole literature in Arabic, and in Europe inspired the troubadours and the *chanson*. Arabia, too, produced its Omar Khayyam.

For the tendency is for literature to end at this period on a pessimistic note. Science stops dead, ideals fade away, religion sinks into formalism or superstition. The later notes in philosophy tend to be less and less original, and more and more the restatement of previous writers, with the necessary additions and subtractions; and schools of neo-Kantians, neo-Hegelians, Stoics and Epicureans, discuss indefinitely indefinite theories without inspiration and without progress. The feeling of failure may be philosophical, or it may be lit-

erary, but in either case it is preliminary to the end of the era. The quatrains of Omar are not the work of one man, but of several, and disillusionment must have been a prevailing feeling in the Arabian world at the end of the twelfth century. Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die, is an easy philosophy; but there is much that lies behind it. Science, philosophy, religion, have all failed to answer the query, knowledge leaves us with one fact only ascertained, "I came like water, and like wind I go." Beyond that, "there was a door to which I found no key." Neither has any one found a key, and the obligatory force of morals and ethics vanishes before the despairing question-mark, so that there is nothing left but the cup of wine, the book of verse, and the dubious afterthought of the "thou." The pessimism of Buddha in India is less definite, for evil as existence is, there is a key to the door. Epicurus and the Epicurean, however, held essentially the same view as Omar. They, too, have found religion a farce, and even if they advise virtue and tranquillity as a way of life, it was merely with the object of securing pleasure and avoiding pain—the last resort of pessimism. In Western Europe, pessimism,

though of a deeper and more serious kind, was affecting life at the close of the nineteenth century. Schopenhauer and Hardy are great examples, the latter the greater of the two, for even if his ideas of the universe are untenable, his ideas on life have shattered the fictions and fairy tales of the Victorians, and left us face to face with the realities of human existence. More serious than other civilisations, the European cannot escape from the problem of the vast mass of suffering humanity, and "The Dynasts" is our finest expression of the pessimism engendered in one who can bear to look at the life of the whole world and find no hope therein. Disillusionment is, then, the note of the end of the period. The idea of enjoying life while you can replaces the ideals of the beginning, and the modern, like the ancient Epicurean, tends to drown his sorrows in another cup, or, in Prohibitionist America, to count money as the sole object worth pursuing.

Here the nineteenth century closes. Magnificent as are its ideals, they end in disappointment, and its literature, the last great artistic flower of the civilisation, closes on a note of calm despair. In many respects, the attitude

of the nineteenth century is that of a great question-mark, and the question is that of the significance of life in general and human life in particular. Unwillingness to accept things at their face value leaves only small hope for the future destiny of humanity. This period passes. The feeling of the civilisation changes, and human beings turn to their material circumstances as their main interest. In the search for material prosperity, they find enough to occupy their interests, and the question-mark is a thing of the past.

CHAPTER VII

THE FUTURE

The great glory of our nineteenth century has undoubtedly been its devotion to ideals. Under the influence of ideals, international politics become a means for the securing the brotherhood of man, national politics a succession of struggles over measures expressing great principles, science a determined advocacy of truth as revealed by facts, and literature an expression of the ideals themselves. Wars were fought for objects that are worth fighting for, political struggles were carried on with desperate earnestness, and controversial disputes were taken seriously because both sides really believed in the truth of the assertions made. Men were great on account of the greatness of the causes for which they fought, as well as of the way in which they fought for them, and figures such as those of Cobden, Mazzini, Bismarck and Cavour were possible, and could command the sincerest admiration and allegiance of their supporters. Great

movements such as those for Free Trade, for nationality, for democracy, for humanitarianism, gave the whole period a feeling which lifts it high above the petty squabbles of the eighteenth century, and can be paralleled, if at all, only at the time of the Reformation. Greece and Arabia have nothing to show in comparison with this. Greek politics in their nineteenth century were hopelessly decadent, and even if they showed a number of socialistic experiments, these are the relatively uninspired selfish movements of an ochlocracy. The Arabian disturbances were merely the squabbles of rival factions and rival claimants to the throne. In Greece, Bright could only have been a member of a Stoic school, and Cavour an unidentified mob leader. In Arabia, Bright would have been a court moralist, and Cavour a vizier of indisputable skill and very doubtful morality. The feeling of the European soul for the active life and the reality of the world, made great politics a possibility. But these differences between Western Europe and the other civilisations, although striking, are, nevertheless, superficial. European politics have made idealism a practical possibility, but it is improbable that they will do so much

longer. During the last fifty years a pursuit of practical ends has become more and more the dominating motive of governments, and peoples are, on the whole, far less inclined to take politics *au grand serieux,* or to think of a political creed in the light of a religion. It has also been found that in practice idealism does not pay. After the brilliant effervescence of 1848, the causes for which men had fought and died with the self-abnegation of religious martyrs were brought to a successful conclusion by methods that were anything but idealistic. As a result of her experiences in 1866 and 1870, Germany developed a "*Real-politik*" of the crudest nature, and France, compelled to follow suit, did so with a thoroughness which resulted in the placing of the Frenchman's duty to France first, and, to the rest of the world, nowhere. The imperial idea, first of all disguised as an ideal, at the beginning of the twentieth century threw off the mask and became purely and simply a policy of landgrabbing and domination. And social reform went the same way. Socialistic ideas in England in particular were at first brought forward as humanitarian appeals to the upper classes to sacrifice themselves in the

interests of the lower, but during the twentieth century the outlook has completely changed and they have become the means of stirring up the poorer classes to vote for one party or another on the grounds of the benefits they may receive by depriving the rich of their possessions. Ideals have not yet disappeared in England, but one has to look far to find them in the France of Poincaré, the Germany of Stinnes, and the Italy of Mussolini. Even with us they are further from the platform and the press than they used to be.

A definite line of development has been followed by the past cultures, and not only is there no reason why Western Europe should deviate from this line, but there are several indications in the present day of our future course. Nineteenth centuries have been disturbed periods in all civilisations, and Spengler talks about them as part of that period of "the warring States" which precedes a civilisation-wide Empire and the conclusion of the culture. Such were the Hyksos period in Egypt and the period from 800–600 B.C. in the Hittite-Assyrian civilisation. The centre of the culture shifts rapidly in varying directions, to Thebes or Memphis or Hermopolis, to Nineveh

or Babylon or Ecbatana. Each area in its turn establishes an ephemeral predominance, only to be overturned by temporarily successful rivals. Towards the end of the period, one of the States, and frequently one which has so far been somewhat outside the main area of the culture, becomes the predominating influence, and in a series of successful wars absorbs all its rivals. One after another the other States succumb to its influence and the period of the civilisation-wide Empire begins. This Empire is the last stage of the civilisation. It commences with a period of unexampled material prosperity and with a relative absence of disturbance or wars except on the frontiers. This period lasts for about 200 years and then ends with a final decay.

To us the example of the classical civilisation is the most significant. After the year 300, Greek political life appears hopelessly decadent; the Eastern Empires were apparently never particularly powerful; and Macedon relied for its prestige on past victories and remained as obstinately conservative in its military tactics as did the Prussians before Jena or the Spaniards before Rocroi. In Greece itself the factions were carrying on internecine

warfare, and the Greek cities were struggling promiscuously together, at the same time as that in which Greek ideals and science were reaching their finest conclusions and diffusing themselves more and more widely in the areas of the culture. The converse of the decadence of Greece is seen in the rise of Rome. It is the period of the great Punic wars, which left Rome complete mistress of the Western Mediterranean, so that by 100 B.C. it was clear to the most casual observer that there was nothing left but for the whole world to submit to the Roman power. The Romans themselves were everything that the Greeks were not. Their thought was borrowed from Greece and mostly mutilated in the borrowing, so that Stoicism became a cast-iron puritanism of "antique Cato," and Epicureanism a licence for the life of pleasure lived by the "hogs of Epicurus' stye." Their literature up to this period was absolutely unimportant and their science negligible, although they would no doubt have taken plenty of interest in the latter if, like Marcellus at Syracuse, they had seen some practical results from it. The Romans, however, are the true exponents, though unconscious of "*Realpolitik*." If a city exists

which rivals Rome in situation or power or commerce, the obvious thing to do is to attack it. If a province is captured, the obvious thing to do is to exploit it. To the individual Roman the obvious thing to do with power was to use it, and later on it became equally obvious that power and money were the only things really worth securing and enjoying. In face of this intensely practical, if narrow-sighted, attitude of mind, Greek opposition was hopeless. Rome produced no political ideals, no thought, no ideas, the Roman concentrated on political domination as the one obvious good because he could see no other, and if the fittest to govern is he who thinks about nothing else but government, it was fitness undoubtedly that created the Roman Empire. "*Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento,*" etc., but there was nothing else that it was necessary for him to remember.

Western Europe is, or should be, still in the period of "the warring States." During the nineteenth century the political centre of Europe might have been found in various periods at any one of the capitals—London, Paris, or Berlin, with St. Petersburg and Vienna close behind—and there is still no definite rallying

point, such as Paris was, and remained for nearly two centuries after 1650. But it seems probable that our civilisation will not be for long without a cultural centre, even if that centre is hardly political in the old sense. It is now quite obvious that beyond training, generalship, and the other factors of military supremacy, power in the Western world rests on wealth. A State with a great industrial population is *ipso facto* powerful, and one without it is *ipso facto* weak. Thus, after 1870, France was helpless before the rising population of Germany rather than before the military prestige of her rival, and Russia was equally feeble in the last war because her vast population was merely peasantry scattered over the country and was not collected in the towns or producing accumulations of capital. The drift of the future in Europe, apart from the War, would have been towards the increasing predominance of Germany, the continued power of England and the relative insignificance of France and Italy and the smaller powers. But meanwhile, once again the State over the water has become extraordinarily formidable. The United States has a territory several times larger than that of Western

Europe, a population of 120,000,000 and a power of accumulating money which is absolutely unrivalled. Before this giant even Germany and England sink into insignificance, and if any one nation is going to control the rest of the world, it is probably that which we loosely call America. The result of the victory over Carthage which gave Rome the control over the Western Mediterranean was obtained peacefully by the United States when they secured Louisiana from Napoleon and so secured a vast extension of territory. Greece neglected to support Carthage against Rome and so made her own downfall certain; Germany was the one conceivable European rival for America, and now that we have helped to destroy her power Europe will fall an easy prey to the colossus she has invoked.

But it is probably not by war that American domination will be achieved. Power in Western Europe is a matter of wealth, and in spite of Communistic theorising wealth is peace-loving. In an industrial world of great cities, cities far larger than any we know to-day, the network of international trade is a factor vital to life. This network is controlled by the financiers who manipulate their own and other

people's accumulation of capital. It is the wealth factor which will secure the predominance of America, and in this America has one great and striking advantage. Like Greece, England and Germany are involved in Communistic and Socialistic ideas and ideals which they attempt to put into practice, and which if they affect nothing else, seriously hamper the acquisition of capital. If they are seriously brought into practice, they may completely ruin the economic edifice of the countries concerned. The average Englishman even is somewhat hampered by the unpractical standards of English life, and finds in politics or sport a rival interest to the supremely important one of making money. But the American is not so hampered. It is occasionally fashionable to speak of American prosperity as due to the fact that she is a new civilisation and of her success as due to her youth, as opposed to Europe's advancing years and possible senility. But nothing could be more obviously absurd. The founders of the United States in the seventeenth century were people with developed Western ideas, and if the Americans have produced no literature of their own, they have at least that of the old world on which to fall

back. If the development appears to be different from that of Europe, it is the difference of Rome from Greece. America, too, has the practical realist spirit, and the same spirit which sent Rome to conquest leads the American to the accumulation of wealth. The average American may not be without ideals of a sort, his business outlook could be paralleled over and over again in English industrial circles, but his great superiority lies in the decisiveness and tenacity with which he holds on to the realist side of life, and it is this which places him in a category totally different from that of the European. It is not Babbitt's ideas which are so remarkable, but the hold which they have over him, and the fact that they dominate his individuality completely. He becomes one of a crowd, the whole of which thinks that the real value of life is in cash, that intellectualism is mere fancy icing on a cake, that Socialism is the negation of everything that is good, that business activity is true virtue. This deadly seriousness in the pursuit of second-rate objectives is a fearsome sight. It sets up a standard of dollar values, to which in the end everything has to conform, and produces movements as extraordinary to us as

those of the Fundamentalists and the creed of the Ku Klux Klan. Where the Englishman is lost in a tangled thicket of contradictory ideas and ideals, and is vainly struggling to harmonise money making, a good life, social equality and scientific truth, the American sees a clear path to a clear goal. And the odds are 100 to 1 on the success of the American in securing his goal and the domination of the world at the same time.

One other important political question remains. In all the great civilisations save one the final Empire was secured by the success of one dynasty over all the rest. In the Classical culture, however, there was considerable political life and there was a larger question than that of dynasties to be solved. Rome in 100 B.C. was nominally a Republic, but at the same time there was a growing tendency for the Republican forms to be employed merely to cover the power of the great generals and financiers. A series of great figures, Marius, Sulla, Pompey, Crassus, and Cæsar, dominates Roman politics; and with Augustus full-blown Imperialism, the representation of the State in one man, comes into being, and the Republican forms begin to disappear for good. Cæsarism

is in spirit something different from despotism. It is a recognition of the fact that what we should call constitutional government does not produce the necessary result, that the constitutional forms do not provide liberty or order, and that the supreme power of one man may be better for the whole State than theoretical liberty or equality. It is also the masses' victory over the classes, in the fact that at least their representative is all powerful, even if they themselves have also to forfeit any share in the government. But how far Western Europe is likely to follow the example of Rome is an open question. Spengler thinks that the politician-financier is the coming force in the history of our civilisation and gives Cecil Rhodes as an example of what is to follow on our present period. Rhodes the financier turned into Rhodes the politician, and in the future a greater Rhodes manipulating the financial interests of New York under the cloak of Congressional methods and Presidential elections may secure the position of a Cæsar of Europe, a position to be consolidated by his successors into an actual Empire. But democratic ideas seem likely to die hard. Disillusioned we may be with parliaments and

assemblies, but "blood and iron" are poor substitutes and dollars are even poorer. The European mind is so completely dominated by its representative institutions and majority votes that it is almost inconceivable that they will ever be abandoned in name or wholly in fact. It is more probable that the Empire stage of Western Europe will take the form of a federation of States in a new and strengthened League of Nations, the wires of which will be covertly pulled by a group of predominant figures in New York. By such a method the final stage of Western Europe, that of social and financial order, may be reached.

Thus in some form or other Western Europe will reach the condition in which the Greco-Roman found itself in 50 B.C. A long period of Empire, lasting approximately 200 years, will commence. The general appearance of the civilisation may be very similar to that of the present day. The Empire stage has always been one of material prosperity and organising power, especially so in Rome, but also in Egypt under the Ramessids, in China under the Han Dynasty, and in the Hittite area under the Persian Empire. The last and greatest development of the cities is the most strik-

ing external phenomenon. Relatively speaking, the country becomes wholly dependent on the city, though the city depends also on the country. The "*latifundia perdidere Italiam*" cry is the despairing wail of the old order, uttered by Tory club dwellers as a protest against an inexorable movement which destroys all that seems to them good and stable. But actually, it means the final exploitation of the land for the benefit of human beings who prefer the wider life of the town to the narrow round of the peasant. Cities contain an immense population. Rome and Bagdad, perhaps, each of them attained the two million point, and though these were capitals and exceptionally large, there were important cities in almost all parts of the cultural area. What size our own future cities may reach almost beggars the imagination, but one may guess at a New York of 20 million and still be within the mark. International trade will increase perhaps tenfold and vast fortunes may be attained. In all this there is merely an extension of the main features of our own time. But in everything that touches the soul, in the whole attitude of mind of the civilisation, there will be a complete difference. Everything that

can conceivably have any ultimate value is tending to disappear. Everything in connection with truth, beauty and goodness takes a back place, and its position is filled by the desire for pleasure and material prosperity, by the gladiatorial displays and the unrivalled licence and luxury of Rome, and the baseball matches and millionaire existence of America.

Science, art, and ideals, are therefore nearing their end. Science in Greece and Arabia reached a dead end. It seems probable that the mental capability for grasping the more abstruse mathematical theories is only produced by a certain stage in a civilisation. Archimedes and Alhazan are only solitary giants, and they are succeeded by the second-rate intelligence which cannot rival their work even if it can appreciate it. Einstein in a similar way may have no successor, and, indeed, Western physics and mathematics are now so complicated that any further progress may be a mental impossibility. Our conception of matter has reached a stage at which matter seems likely to disappear in energy, and relativity, with all the considerations which it involves, is beyond the intelligence of all but a very select very few. It is quite possible that

mechanical and chemical inventions will continue for some time and may produce results as striking as they have recently done. They are indeed almost peculiar to Western Europe, and there is little analogy by which they may be judged. We may yet hear political speakers broadcasted thousands of miles away and at the same moment see their actions thrown on to the screen, or move to our work in the great cities of the future by methods of locomotion still undreamed of. Nevertheless, original science will be dead. Such work as there is will consist of the systematisation of knowledge, such as was carried out in the law in other civilisations, in the codes of Hammurabi or Manu, or in medicine by Galen, or in history by the Dictionary of Biography in Arabia. We ourselves are already in the stage of world history, and we shall soon follow on to the final systematisation of science and mathematics. Original art is also dead. The Augustan Age did indeed produce a literature, but while every one must admit that it was literature of a high class, it was the literature of form rather than of spirit—certainly in the Silver Age—and has little of the essence of beauty and less of inspiration. Sculpture, if not commemora-

tive portraiture, was the copying of Greek models, and architecture entered on its last stage, the stage of huge formless buildings, giving the impression of size and magnificence and nothing else. Such were the great Roman palaces and buildings, and a similar tendency was shown in Babylon and Bagdad. The skyscrapers of New York and the architecture of America show the same spirit at work.

One other factor is of some importance for the Empire stage of all civilisations. The great philosophical movements of the nineteenth centuries have a tendency to turn themselves into a form in which they can recommend themselves to the minds of the masses in the towns. In other words, they become religious. It was during the Empire period of India that Buddhism was spread over the whole of the Empire by Asoka, as a form of worship. It was probably during the same period in China that Confucianism and Taoism began to assume their later form. In each case a philosophy added to itself the element of a propitiation of the supernatural, which alone could answer the hopes and fears of the mass and make it popular. Something of the same sort is to

be seen in the classical world. Christianity as it appears in the Gospels may be said to have a triple nature. The apocalyptic matter is early Arabian, the teaching of the supernatural is unique, the ethical matter belongs to the Stoics. Developed by Paul into a theology, some elements of which were comprehensible to a low intelligence, it took its place among all the mysteries and esoteric creeds of the Empire. Finally, it succeeded in conquering them all, although by that time the civilisation was at an end. On the other hand, Arabia produced no new way of life, and in the Empire stage, atheisms and pessimisms settled down into a general carelessness for forms and a general acquiescence in the dogmas of Mohammed; while in Rome, at the height of its power, this second religious phase is exemplified in the worship of the Cæsar. Western Europe has also to find a new way of life. There is nothing for her to do but to fall back on dogmas, and it seems probable that while for a time a nominally evangelical religion, reinforced by the powerful auxiliaries of wireless, the cinema, spot lights and "go getter" parsons, will hold its own, the end will rest with a Socialised Ca-

tholicism. We are perhaps too sophisticated to worship a greater Lord Leverhulme in the person of the coming Emperor.

Thus we shall reach the Empire. Previous civilisations have ended simply and solely in a decline, generally accompanied by internal disturbances and sometimes completed by foreign invasion. In Egypt and China and Babylon nothing in particular happens. The organisation of the Empire remains, but the soul of the civilisation has departed. The people sink into what Spengler calls a fellaheen existence, in which the only interest in life is the need of the moment, and population, mainly agricultural, lives a hand to mouth existence without politics, without art, without science, and without ideals. The final stage, in fact, leaves the social organisation curiously resembling feudalism. All over the Western Roman Empire the villa system grew up, which so much resembled the later manor that there was at one time a serious controversy over the derivation of the latter from the former. On the frontiers the Roman legions began to develop a regular feudal organisation with hereditary leaders and hereditary followers. The latter held land along with the duty of

service in the field. This last point was undoubtedly exceptional, and was due to the continual pressure of the barbarians and to the necessity for meeting it at a time when the Empire was no longer capable of maintaining a huge regular army. Civil disturbance in Rome and India indicates the complete break-up of the civilisation; and usually the end of the Empire means the formation of a number of smaller states, although this depends largely on geographical conditions. It would undoubtedly be the fate of Western Europe. Finally, there is the possibility of the break-up of the culture by foreign invasion. The Persian Empire fell before Alexander, the Roman before the Germans, the Aztecs and Incas before Cortes and Pizarro. In such cases the old civilisation disappears completely and is replaced by the newcomer in whatever stage he may be; and nothing is left save the ruins of his cities, and possibly his literature, to testify to the splendours that have gone. That a decaying Europe might be completely smashed by a Russia in its Renaissance is possible, though hardly probable. There is no reason to suppose that the weapons which have been given us by science will fall into disuse, and

there is still less reason to imagine that Russia will show the adventurous spirit of the West, or even of Greece and Rome. It is far more probable that after the united civilisation stage has passed and the various areas have set up again separate governments, a long period of apparent quiescence would result. History would recount meaningless political changes, meaningless wars, meaningless theories and decadent art. In the real sense there would be no more history than there was in India after Asoka or in Babylon after Hammurabi; until the rising Russian culture spread its influence as far as the Atlantic Ocean.

Such a stage need not necessarily be particularly uncomfortable, nor would it be obviously very different from that in which the majority live at present. The average Mohammedan, under the Ottoman, lived a life not very dissimilar to that lived by the average Mohammedan under Haroun-al-Raschid. The last stages of the culture seriously affect relatively few, and the life of the masses remains a permanent and practically unaltered factor. The same voice from the same minaret calls the believer to prayer. The same judge with the same conscience yields to the same bribe.

The same official makes the same demands, and if life is more uneasy and more unsettled, the variation is not enough to change the general aspect of existence or the general attitude of mind. The greatest factor of all, the general idea, has sunk deep into the minds of the people, and the Hindu is still brought up in the atmosphere of Karma and Dharma, while the Chinee is surrounded by the idea of social duties. What has happened, is that eminent writers, thinkers, politicians, artists, and the rest of them, no longer come into existence; thought and literature and the spirit which can hold together a great organised empire have passed, and with them everything of real value. Town populations may decrease, but life remains possible, and a very considerably organised life as well. In A.D. 2500, trains may conceivably be running more or less as now, business houses still go bankrupt, and divorce judges make as humorous remarks. The fact that no one can write like Meredith, that musical composition has ceased, and that no one can understand Einstein, may pass unnoticed. Although the whole tendency will be to look back to a better age, that is a tendency which, with the solitary exception of the nine-

teenth century, is universal in the whole world. Every one has always seen decadence in movement, and the fact that the decadence is real and not imaginary will not cast any particular gloom over what is left.

This, however, does not complete the story of that future which may reasonably be forecasted on the basis of the analogy of the past. Western Europe is not the only civilisation in existence. Under the influence of a pseudomorphosis, almost as powerful as that which dominated the early Arabian culture, Russia still retains in individual life an attitude of mind which is utterly different from any to which we are accustomed; and, moreover, that attitude of mind has, as far as can be seen, grown up during the last century. As opposed to such cultures as India and China, where the thought of past civilisations has produced a *vis inertiæ* of tremendous resisting power but no expansive instinct, Russian thought is active and aggressive, and, even in the present, has produced considerable effect upon our own feelings towards life. From the point of view of politics and society, it is impossible to say in what stage Russia is at the moment. The work of Peter the Great in occupying the Baltic

coast and in transferring the capital to St. Petersburg accelerated the progress of that influence of Western ideas which in any case was inevitable. And the power which machinery and modern weapons give to the central government has made anything in the nature of feudal politics an absurdity. In the same way, a feudal social system which existed until the time of Alexander II. was swept away owing to the influence of Western humanitarian ideas, and, at the present moment, the Socialistic government, in a culture which is only just born, actually serves as a model to the Communists of our own twentieth century. It is unnecessary to diverge into a discussion of the absurdity of the idea of any real Communism in Russia. But one striking fact remains clear. At the close of the Great War, in Western Europe, every tendency of European civilisation was accentuated, and nothing was more striking than the way in which in England, Germany and America, the town economically and politically reasserted its predominance over the country. The short bid for economic supremacy made by the country passed away with the ephemeral conditions of the war, and the normal development towards the domina-

tion of the city continued. In the Russian world, on the contrary, among all the Slav peoples, the country defeated the town, and the peasants in Russia, Roumania, Poland, Bulgaria and Jugo-Slavia, succeeded economically, and in some cases politically, in moving the whole course of life in the opposite direction. Freeing himself from the necessity of payment or service for his land, the peasant gained the upper hand of those classes which were affected by European economic and social ideas. And though international trade is too powerful a factor to be dispensed with, it is now the servant of the peasant and not his master, and will be worked in harmony with his feelings and not against them. But this leaves the question of the exact stage reached by Russian culture still open. From the social history of Russia we may agree that it is still feudal, and from the appearance of the village community it would seem to be in the earlier rather than the later stage of the feudal epoch. A closer approximation may perhaps be gained from a consideration of Russian thought. Expressed in Western forms, and, therefore, far more clear than that of other civilisations, the typical Russian attitude to life as expressed by

Tchekov, Turgenieff, Dostoievsky and others, has only appeared in the nineteenth century. It is from the literature of this period that we have become aware of the vital difference between the Russian feeling, a destructive conflict in the human soul, and the Western feeling for a creative active life. It is extraordinarily difficult to find an exact parallel. The sects of the Ebionites and Nazarenes in Arabia developed in the first century B.C., and the first signs of real European culture appeared somewhere round about the year A.D. 900, preceding the Cluniac Reformation. In the one case, the typical Arabian feeling produced an evident demonstration of itself, and, in the other, the European spirit was to a certain extent manifested in the study of theology, philosophy and the classics, which commences round the monasteries of France and Germany. Undoubtedly, with Western means of expression, the Russian spirit will become manifest in a relatively developed manner as soon as it becomes conscious. If this analogy is correct, Russia is in the same position to-day as was Europe at the time of the Saxon Emperors in Germany, the Capetians in France, or even of William the Conqueror in England. If so,

Peter the Great would correspond to Charlemagne, and we might expect a Russian Renaissance at about A.D. 2500.

By that time Western European civilisation will have reached its close. All over the Western world there would probably be commercial states occupying towards Russia a position similar to that which Tyre and Carthage occupied towards the younger civilisations of Greece. Russian culture, advancing westwards with, but more probably without, armed force, would begin to make its influence felt over the whole of Europe, and long before our own civilisation would have appeared to have passed through more than a temporary decline, it would be reanimated by a new spirit. What this new spirit will produce in science and art, it is impossible to say. One may guess that its main tendency will not be towards practical activity, and one may also guess that its artistic achievements will be of a high order.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

It is unlikely that this book will have carried conviction, partly because the subject has not been treated at adequate length, partly because the area of ideas covered is strange, and an adjustment of attitude is required which it would be difficult for most people to make, and can only be attained by considerable effort. There is a further obstacle in the connotation we have given to the word "civilisation" which is out of the ordinary and opposed to a good many modern prejudices. Finally, we have to put away preconceived ideas and let the statement of fact work its effect without conscious interference on our part: many of our thinkers have read the whole of Spengler's work and have failed even to comprehend his thesis.

There may, however, be a few who have been convinced at least intellectually, although they find themselves unwilling and unable to accept views which seem opposed to their deeper feelings and wishes, and which, since the

great achievements of our civilisation are destined to stagnate or even die out, must seem pessimistic; for they find such inevitable stagnation more intolerable than that we should blow ourselves to pieces by our own follies or wickednesses. Just as in the Middle Ages the Church would not and could not accept the heliocentric theory of the universe because it seemed absurd that Providence should concentrate on the few million of the chosen out of all the billions of other earths or possible earths, just as in the nineteenth century the average man would not and could not accept evolution as a theory because it made him look so insignificant, so Spengler has not been received with the attention he deserves, because we have exaggerated notions of our own importance and scorn the humility which we preach in our religion. And so we draw our interpretation of history from a period of about 150 years. Galileo and Darwin conquered, even if their theories have been modified; some day, Spengler will conquer too.

This is the more probable, if we are right in asserting that one of the driving forces of Europe has been a love of truth for its own sake, a love of truth in facts which is on a

different level from the love of truth of the Greeks, who faced the world less inquisitively, though quite as boldly. If it is true, therefore, the thesis of this book will be accepted over the Western area and in the near future. It may be that Spengler's work was published before its time, but even so, the almost complete neglect or contempt with which it is treated in England is unjust; and when the "Library of Civilisation," which Kegan Paul are issuing in 200 odd volumes, is completed, it will be found that Spengler will have given form and meaning to what, without his vision, was an incoherent mass of facts and ideas. Spengler has seen that the last task of value before the Western world ceases to produce first-class minds, whether creative or comprehensive, is to lay the foundations for a scientific morphology of history and knowledge.

The ground had been prepared for Spengler. He realises himself that it was only possible for his work to have appeared at this particular period of this particular civilisation. The nineteenth century taught us to look everywhere for scientific law; the twentieth century has helped to accumulate the material which is now available for the scientist of the future.

The path that led to Einstein has been prepared by the physicists and mathematicians of the nineteenth century, and, in the same way, Spengler has had his forerunners. Such men as Hegel, H. S. Chamberlain, H. G. Wells, however partial their results, however misguided their methods, have accustomed us to a study of world history and to take the whole of history into consideration. But it was reserved for Spengler to formulate and isolate the law in all its clearness and lucidity.

The bare statement that humanity evolves by means of definite civilisations, and not by a continuous growth of civilisation, the formulation of the Law of Civilisation, together with the dates of the commencement of each culture and the periods of its process, should be sufficient to illuminate the whole contents of this book, provided that the general law is understood. The arrangement of the historic civilisations in a Periodic Table gives the solution of a problem, which may be worked out fully and in detail by any one who has the necessary insight into history. We shall find everywhere uniformity of form and individuality of content. But it will be only by a substitution for the attitude of Darwin and

Huxley of that of Goethe that true understanding will come. The scientist of the future must not refuse to let a vital intuition take the place of a dead intellectualising.

For itself, too, Spengler's theory is worth study, and it is no objection, even if it were true, to say that it is useless. Palæontology is still more useless, in this sense, but palæontological books have a wide circulation. History itself is useless, for identical circumstances never recur; and analogies, if superficially worked out, are merely harmful. By them history may be made to teach anything, though it is as often as not but the garrulity of the old venting itself on the credulity of the young, and in our day has become either a meaningless jumble, or a subject of research as useless to the ordinary man as the study of Greek particles.

But neither the ordinary history nor Spengler is useless, if they achieve something towards the understanding of men, ages, and civilisations. History attempts this often enough, but from ignorance of the course which history has taken a vast proportion of periods have been misunderstood or neglected and forced to teach what is quite untrue. It

is only lately that many civilisations have been studied, and it is good fortune rather than good management which selected the classical period for study in detail. That civilisation does, as it happens, teach us most, and gives us most of what is of real value in the narrowest compass; but even its lessons we are in danger of neglecting now, both because we are naturally becoming more antipathetic to the Greek view and because we object to the Roman (on the same principle as that on which we dislike our relatives, since they exemplify the faults which flourish within ourselves and which we try to conceal from ourselves!). Yet the Romans, with their utilitarianism, their insistence on business and the practical, are the people to whose qualities our own civilisation will approximate whether we will it or no. Theirs, and periods in other civilisations contemporary with theirs, are those we should study most carefully.

The object of historians should, therefore, be to absorb the thesis of this book, and, having absorbed it, to concentrate on the valuable periods of history. If history is to show us what man is likely to be, they should look in detail at the last 400 years of the earlier civili-

sations, of which a good deal is known, and thereby make it clear to what type of mind and social or political organisation Europe is likely to proceed. If history is to help us to reach absolute values, they should study with the greatest care those periods which illustrate them most clearly. Examinations in "ancient" or "modern" history should be scrapped except for the specialist, and should, in any case, be subordinated to the morphological study of history. Other periods need not be neglected, but they must be dealt with in relation to their place in their own civilisations, and not only from the modern standpoint which tends to damn anything it disapproves of as less advanced than itself.

The idea is valuable, not merely because we believe it to be true, but because it has a practical bearing in teaching us on what we should most insist if we would be of importance or have any meaning in our own civilisation; the artist to-day, if he tries to create, is likely to be a crank, and is valuable only in so far as he helps us to appreciate the absolute values of the past. But it does not follow, *per contra,* that all are contemptible who do not excel in business or technical science, for we still need poli-

ticians and statesmen; and we are still human beings, with emotions to satisfy and capacities to develop which are more than Western European, not wholly dependent on our living at this stage of development. We may not be able to stay the course of the whole, but realising the limits which bound us, we may help ourselves, our country and our civilisation, and we may modify our aims by revaluing our aims and objects.

Here there arises a more deep-seated objection to the theory. It has to be fitted into a philosophy in two ways, an ethical and a metaphysical. There is first the question what is to be our aim; second, the restrictions on our freedom involved in acceptance of it; and in order to be satisfactory, we should have to answer both these questions in a way which is impossible in a concluding chapter.

The first leads up to and is involved in the second problem. Assuming that for most men the ethical end is happiness, we shall find that the content given to the word is more or less predetermined by the age in which we live, and so the solution which most of us would give to-day is similar to that given by our contemporaries in other civilisations, and ex-

cept in detail is not new. Happiness consists for us in one of two things, in enjoying ourselves or in helping others; we are either atheists, materialists, hedonists, or theists, idealists, humanitarians. This restriction enforced on us in the religious or ethical attitude we adopt seems to the ordinary man so like determinism that he may be expected to reject the whole theory on its account; yet if he only realised it, the restrictions of all kinds in which he moves and lives are so far-reaching that one more or less should not seem to him vital, even though it is in apparently vital ways that it affects him. If he is honest and sincere with himself he will study the facts and allow the conclusions to produce their effect; he may not burke the facts nor put on them a capricious interpretation to please himself.

However radical, therefore, the determinism may be in which we find ourselves involved, we must adjust ourselves to the conclusions, until we have experience that it is within our power to burst our bonds. If we have clear evidence that we are omnipotent or even potent enough to overcome the obstacles that the culture or age in which we live puts in our path, we may arrogate to ourselves all the

liberty we desire; but we should do well to realise first that God has probably less of such liberty than any other being we conceive or know. Why should we imagine a civilisation to be a purely voluntary or disconnected feature on this planet? Why not agree that it has cosmic significance and inspiration which we cannot know? No metaphysic we can give will satisfy, for the day of satisfying metaphysics was passed in the day of Kant. Mysticism, which is the favourite resort of many, is to most of no avail.

Our metaphysic, such as it is, must be of a biological kind, attaching itself to the biochemical and biometric sciences of to-day. We have to believe that a civilisation is an organism like other organisms, that its course is, in essential outline, predetermined like that of a flower, and that little credit attaches to it for its flower and as little blame for its withering away. We are part of a greater whole which lies within the hands of powers greater than ourselves to raise or cast down. It would be driving the analogy to extremes to assume that because a civilisation is akin to a flower and because a flower has presumably no soul, a civilisation is identical with a flower.

Even a flower has some formative principle which science in itself cannot explain or understand; a civilisation and human beings may have some similar principle which decides the form which a culture and our bodies are to assume. Even this principle we need not believe to be impersonal or material, and a metaphysic of this kind avoids the naturalistic fallacies of Darwin and Huxley. Human beings within a civilisation have other qualities which may be due to other principles, and it is unnecessary to assume that because we are determined in one part of our existence, as is a flower, therefore we are wholly so restricted. Biological parallels on a small scale must not mislead us, for even to compare a plant and an animal lands us in absurdities if we go too far, and the difference between a plant and a civilisation is far greater than that between a plant and an animal. As an analogy the idea has value and must be insisted on even for the individual, for there is a plant-like principle within us.

This determinism will not lead to quietism or pessimism in those to whom the theory will appeal most thoroughly. They are those who are in the best sense in harmony with their en-

vironment, and are the leaders of their time. Calvinism never had the effect it logically should have had, for though it became more rigid in dogma, in practice those to whom it appealed adapted themselves to it, and it to themselves. In the same way, those to whom Spengler will appeal will be men of intelligence or of practical ability, who, realising the truth of the facts, will adapt themselves to their civilisation and their civilisation to themselves. To those who are tough-minded, as William James would have called them, there is no need to soften the theory; they may be trusted to carry on, though they know that they cannot even by eugenics—a limited and typically nineteenth century phenomenon—prevent the biological development of their civilisation.

The tender-minded will, as usual, need honey to sweeten the wormwood. In this instance, it may be they who will divert our civilisation from its normal decay. It is not at all essential, even if it is highly probable, that Western Europe must follow the path of all other civilisations. No scientist believes that what has been must be, and we must deal with the possibility of Europe avoiding the decline and stagnation of others. The tender-

minded, in their eagerness to avoid the draught that is too strong for them, may, by reaction, find some means of escape. The knowledge of what should be in store for them may rouse them to some capacity to avoid it, while the tough-minded are not troubled. Apart from some "chance" event, an event which would be "chance" only in our eyes, for if it occurred we should regard it either as having cosmic inspiration or as being the reward to deserving humanity from higher powers which created the universe—there are two chief methods by which we may change the normal course of events.

The first possibility is that we may work somehow on the material world, so that a reaction from it to us will prevent our decline. It may be technical scientific means, it may be that we shall have to imagine life in A.D. 2200 or some other year A.D., as H. G. Wells or G. B. Shaw so fascinatingly paints it for us. The change may be due to increased knowledge of biology, so that we may regulate the proportions of the sexes, of intelligence, of practical ability, of skilled and unskilled labour; and, coupled with eugenics, we may have a wonderfully regulated society of ecto-

genetic human beings, whose life is ordered according to the edicts of state or international advisers and doctors. Such methods, fantastic as they sound, are possible enough, but they concentrate too much on the material side of life and largely avoid the problem of deciding the real aim of existence. Happiness on these lines means only material prosperity directed outwards. If that is to be the solution of our ethical problem, biologists would do well to discover how to prevent the sterility of genius and capacity which always seems to set in. Otherwise we shall have splendid schemes of happiness but no one capable of management or control, or of any enjoyment higher than animal.

There is a second, inner possibility of averting decline. It is one propounded by most of the clerical critics of Spengler. They assume that salvation may come to us, if we so will it, because the birth of Christ has given new spiritual power to the world. If the world makes use of the gift, the vitality of Western civilisation will remain and a new phase will begin. As a rule, the fact of the course of past civilisations is not denied, and they impute the cycles to an overwatching Prov-

idence. But they will find it hard to dovetail Christianity, especially of the Western type, into their other notions, for religions are, like art, one side of the cultural manifestation. Each culture has its own religion and in the first instance Christianity was the driving force in the age of faith in part of the Arabian culture, and over its area, and in the phases of its development the Early Fathers, the Councils and heresies, and the outburst of Mohammedanism appeared. Western Europe at its birth about A.D. 900 came under the influence of Christianity and the native myths and legends took on Christian colouring, so that a pagan stratum always exists underneath the Christian. In its feeling for God, Western religion would have been similar without Christianity; in form, Christianity has diverted it. If we compare Christianity as it appears in the Gospels, apocryphal as well as canonical, with the Catholicism of Europe and the humanitarianism of to-day, we shall realise that though the name survives the meaning has changed. Genuine Christianity is incompatible with the idea of growth; it postulates a community of the faithful, to whom absolute revelation has been given once and for all,

and who will receive beatification within a definite period. Thus "by itself," Christianity does not prove that we shall survive as a civilisation. Still we may feel within ourselves that there is an absolute revealed religion of universal validity, and not, as it would rather seem, a series of religions which work in the world within the framework of the civilisations, as laid down, or we may believe that even Christianity had to work within those limits.

We can, however, hope that we may do something by our technical skill and our intellectual or spiritual power to make our civilisation more vital than others. We must probably give up hope of being progressively more prolific of genius, especially of the sort of genius we require. We must no longer pin our faith to Anglo-Saxondom or to the Nordic race, and must face the fact that all races have their ups and downs, so that there will come a time when they will cease to produce the type of mind which lends lustre and value to a period, be it a Dante or a Hildebrand, a Luther or a Loyola, a Cromwell or a Louis XIV., a Napoleon or a Bismarck, a Cecil Rhodes or a Ford. The appearance of the

world in those days is not hard to imagine. We have before us at least two other examples in all their clearness. Egypt, as a creative civilisation, died out with the Theban Empire, but the organisation which the Ramessids had built up and the economic system on which they had founded their rule lasted until the invasion of the Arabs. Life went on, but there was little in the life to make it historically important or valuable from a human viewpoint; it was stagnant. Our other example is China, where much the same course of events is to be found. The system developed by the Han Dynasty about 100 B.C. became the basis of Chinese life, and, as the main idea of China was always one of order and careful action, it was able to produce the delusion of a second culture in the painting and pottery which survived until close on A.D. 1000. But in China, again, life was almost purely zoological, it had no active value. If we are to assume, as may indeed be true, that the height of human happiness and achievement is to be found in those nations which have no history, we may feel comfortable in the thought that the Western world may even surpass China in the *vis inertiæ* which it will create in its last stages. But

if we rather believe that what is valuable in humanity is found in its art and its thought and its politics, there is little consolation to be found in the prospect. Such a period of rest is not to be encouraged, except as a stage of preparation for active achievement in all the forms and phases which occur during the course of one of the higher cultures. It will be only when Western Europe comes under the influence of the Russian civilisation that it will again be of value for the historian or probably for the philosopher. At that time it may again produce something that helps the universal course of the whole of humanity.

For the best solution we can adopt towards a reconciliation of Spengler and the ordinary man's views of progress is to imagine that each culture produces something which contributes towards the spiritual advance of the world; that it is only possible for the higher powers, which most men assume to exist, to work their way through the medium of these cultures, and that each one in its course does something to raise the whole of our planetary existence on to a higher level. We might even assume that we have successive reincarnations in each civilisation, and that we are thereby enabled

to attain to full enjoyment of the powers for which we are in the end to be capable. Then when the cycle of existences on this earth has reached its end, we shall be enabled to co-operate with those powers in their work of shaping the whole course of the universe towards final and perfect goodness.

Our immediate and practical task is double, and it is fertile enough in both fields. We have first to work out in its fullest possible detail and deepest meaning the true course of events in each civilisation, and, second, to show the "chance" effects and interconnections of the various civilisations. To approach the first task we need, not only a detailed knowledge of the facts of the period we are studying, but a full understanding of and insight into Spengler's principles. That is, we must know what is the fundamental idea of the civilisation, and what are the principles of its development. In their barest outline these have been given in various chapters, but the more philosophic of them, and therefore the more controversial, have been omitted, and are too complicated to discuss in a concluding chapter. Stated in their briefest and most unconvincing form, they may be reduced to two: there are

in the world two moving principles or forces, and they manifest themselves in two particular spheres, activities, modes of thought, of action and of feeling: there is in each of us a principle which is akin to the vital principle of a plant, "*das Pflanzenhafte*," and another which is akin to the moving force of animals, "*das Tierhafte*," and these two forces act within a civilisation to produce the two great orders of the Nobles and the Priesthood. The nobles are the human expression of the first, the priesthood is the second principle in its purest form; thus the nobles tend to act instinctively, immediately, out of the close relation between themselves and the soil, the priesthood is more liberated, and, therefore, more intellectual; the nobles represent the principle of time which is a matter of intuition, as Bergson has seen, and which is irreversible, unique, while the priests represent rather space, which is intellectual, fossilised, cold. It is the antithesis of "*das Werdende*" and "*das Gewordene*." These two forms of existence we have mentioned in the chapter on politics. In all ways of thinking, of acting, of believing, of desiring, they may be analysed; and it is the conflict between them

which produces the conflict of the civilisation, the tragedy of it and its great individuals.

To trace the growth of these principles and the development of the two classes which embody them is one of the problems of the future historian, and to grasp them in their fulness and their import is to open up some prospect of unravelling the deeper tangles of each civilisation. Nobility and priesthood have very different feelings, the one for the other, in different civilisations, and it is from them that we may get a clear idea of the fundamental attitude or symbol. But we have to go warily, because the superficial view is generally the wrong one, and it is only too easy to blunder. There is an enormous scope for our students and University Professors to distinguish themselves and to do real service to the study of their respective civilisations. The ideas in their vaguer form may lead to the discovery of new cultures, as, *e.g.*, what we have called the Hittite-Assyrian, which will be found to conform in every way that can so far be tested to the scheme of Spengler, and will explain a great many difficulties which seemed inexplicable, and a mass of facts which seemed

incoherent. But the application of the principles in this way is of comparatively minor value, when we realise the immense service that may be done in Egypt, in Sumer and Accad, in China, in India, and even in Greece. The texts which would have to be studied for the first four are a sealed book to all but a very few, and there is little prospect, at present, of such a study of the later Indian or Chinese books as will throw the light that is available on the political, as well as on the intellectual history of early days. But for the classical civilisation there are numbers of men who could do most valuable service. The younger generation of University lecturers has a splendid opportunity to do original work in the systematic elucidation of early classical civilisation, by tracing the change in attitude of the great men from the time of Agamemnon to that of Augustus. Even if they only applied the principles to the statesmen and adventurers of whom something is known, the biographies of Greek heroes would be a closely coherent corpus of representative men instead of a disconnected series of casual remarks. But there is more than this to be done. Of Greek history before 700 B.C., the history books con-

tain very little except some few odd remarks on excavations and finds; and as soon as these finds reach any considerable number, they are at once fossilised into systems without reference to anything else. Thus we have Minoan chronology and Naucratite pottery studied in detail, but in such a way that it is wholly out of relation to the rest of the culture. Instead, we might have a really illuminating study of the development of art or politics.

We may be excused for giving some definite examples of what we consider desirable. In politics the whole of our sources, chiefly mythological, must be reworked and the facts extracted which are relevant to the civilisation as a whole.

The history of Athens, Sparta, Corinth, Megara, Argos, Miletus, and many other towns, will be quite clear in its development and will be found to adhere closely to a given formula. By comparing it with that of Western Europe we shall find that Greece passed from the feudal stage, of which we have faint recollections in the stories of Agamemnon, through that of the weakening of the kings, which we find in the Odyssey, to that of full oligarchy. If we understand the general idea

of the classical civilisation we shall also realise why it is that feudalism there was so different superficially from Europe; but the essence is the same. There must have been many feudal officials who survived in name, but not in activity, until later times, and who correspond with the host of dignitaries in the Empire of Constantine; as we have stated, a civilisation begins with a vital feudalism and ends with a dead one, but there must be some resemblance between the form assumed by each end of each civilisation. In Europe the weakening of the king allowed the hereditary idea to survive and the monarchy to recover; in Greece that was impossible, for the absolute form of State there was either complete democracy or complete oligarchy, whereas in Europe it was almost of necessity monarchic.

We can dig into the myths and genealogies of early Greek history, and when we know the sort of thing to look for we shall be able to shed much light even on the darkest period from 1100–800 B.C. Certainly for the years after that until we reach the clear light of the later sixth century, there is much that can be done by a wise use of such sources as Theognis, Archilochus and the logographers. During the

struggle of the nobles among themselves family tradition was bound to be strong, but there is nothing in Greece like the Wars of the Roses, where the essential thing for the usurper was to claim descent from an earlier king. The relegation of the Medontids to their backward position in Athens is quite a different thing. In Greece, too, we have the extraordinary institution of the annual office, which is the exact opposite of the dynastic principle, and the height of the noble period in Greece came about 700–650 B.C., when we know, that in Athens at least, the annual archonship was in full force. There are many dates given traditionally by the genealogists which will be found to fit exactly as they should, not merely in the number of years from the Trojan War, as Eduard Meyer showed, but into the necessary period of political development.

Thus a casual remark about the political history of any of the important early towns may become the key to its history. By the age of the tyrants all is clear and plain sailing; all the States of which we know anything and which entered into the classical culture at all conform either to pure democracy or to pure oligarchy. The result of the specially Greek

feeling and the duality of possible form was the condition of stasis which, in its worst form, is fortunately peculiar to Greece. The tyranny, as Spengler has shown, and as P. N. Ure had indicated, is the age of the wealthy business man who gains power by helping the "*tiers état*" against the nobles, even though himself often a noble. It is the beginning of the period which closes with the "French Revolution," the Lex Hortensia and the Third Century Greek States, in which the plebs is the whole of the nation that matters. Tyranny is thus the transition to Greek democracy, which must not in any way be confused with nineteenth century democracy. It was not till the manumission of the slaves began on a large scale and the growth of the fourth class, that the ancient world came to anything like present-day democracy. Athens reached the height of Greek democracy, but there were other States like her. Sparta, which is so exceptional superficially, is easily intelligible now: the Spartiatæ represent the old nobles, the ephors the noble official set up to weaken the king—a sort of Spartan Magna Carta—the Perioeci are the *tiers état,* who should have been raised to full citizen rights in the sixth

century, but who, owing to the Lycurgean institution which must date from about 700 B.C., were permanently kept in the background, until Pausanias made a belated effort at the tyranny by promising them and the Helots political equality; the effort failed, and Sparta fossilised; nevertheless, whenever there was any political activity at Sparta, even though it was led by a king, it was in keeping with the whole development of the classical civilisation: the most conspicuous example of this is the Communistic attempt of Cleomenes in 220 B.C.

The other apparent exception to the law is Rome. Of early Roman constitutional history very little has been made in the past, and though historians have agreed that our sources are unreliable and romantic, they have always tried to get back to them, or have failed to realise the basis of truth in them. The key to Roman political history is the realisation that it did not enter the classical area until about 600 B.C., but that from then onwards it came under the influence of all the ordinary forms. P. N. Ure has realised that Servius Tullius was a typical tyrant from the use of his wealth, though not from his reforms of

the Comitia Centuriata which resemble somewhat those of Solon. In 500 B.C., Rome was a fairly large town, and on the path of normal classical development to democracy. If we keep Greece in mind and realise that the tribunate is the essential thing in fifth century Roman history, a few dates will make the whole period clear. The fifth century should be the period of classical democracy; it failed at Rome, though there were many signs of it, because of the institution of the tribunate at the critical moment, which diverted for the time the energies of the democrats, and gave them apparent power and privilege. By its institution, just at the period when Pericles began his career at Athens, Rome was enabled to ward off the attacks of the plebs and to found a nobility of hereditary officials which included both the old nobles and the best of the plebeians. The increase of the power of the plebs continued as was inevitable, but the strengthening of the tribunate was of little real importance except so far as it kept the plebs quiet. All the various laws of the fifth and fourth centuries weakened the senate and comitia, but strengthened the magistrates, so that when finally the Lex Hortensia, which

gave absolute power to the plebs, was passed, it was no longer as fatal as it might have been; and together with the wars on which Rome was engaged for 150 years it postponed the development to "nineteenth century democracy" till the time of Tiberius Gracchus. The tradition which arose among the noble families was sufficient to keep them in power long after the time when they should normally have given place completely to men like Flaminius. By wise and clever moves, such as the formation of the country tribes as a reply to the city tribes of the tribunician assembly in 471 B.C., as the compromise of the military tribunate which remained largely "noble," unlike the strategia at Athens, as the opening of all offices to the plebs and ex-tribunes, they managed to keep the real power in the hands of the magistrates and thus of themselves. Rome never became a democracy until the time of the Gracchi, and then it was too late.

It is perhaps not in politics that the greatest advance will be made. Early Greek thought and religion—indeed, the whole religious development of the classical civilisation—is at present in a hopeless jumble, and there is no adequate treatment, even in a tentative form.

Any one who can find order in it and trace the development will be doing the greatest service to classical history; and it is easy to see where the start must be made. Pythagoras is the representative of the "Puritan" period in Greece and followed on a Reformation which was somehow connected with Dionysus; further, in Greece, with its many gods, the conflict between the priestly and noble tradition would take the form not of two different conceptions of one God—as in Europe, where the clergy and feudal lords reverenced in name one God, and in fact two or more—but the very gods worshipped by the two classes would be different in name. This explains why Dionysus and Demeter are so unimportant in Homer, for Homer was the poet of the nobles and glorified the gods of the nobles; the forms of worship of the priestly gods, the ideas that underlay the worship, have to be laboriously disinterred from the myths, and particularly the myths of Orpheus and Dionysus. There must have been Orphic priests as far back as 1000 B.C., if not earlier, and the whole of the, to us irrational, stories of Orpheus and his worship, of Dionysus Zagreus, and of the apparently non-Greek features in the myths, will be found

to be part of the priestly tradition which was finally taken over by Plato and worked up into his magnificent system of eschatology. Some of the ideas, many of the names, much of the decoration, may be Oriental or Asiatic, but the whole thought in its essence is as much Greek as the tradition of Homer, and how the two could be brought into a glorious unity is shown by Pindar, who was himself in the priestly tradition, but infused with the ideals of the nobles. There is a vast mass of material in Hesiod, in the Orphic poems, in the pre-Socratics, in Plato and the later Platonic commentators which needs to be stratified and ordered, so that we may have as clear a view of Greek religion as we have of the Catholic from the time of St. Bernard, through St. Francis, Dante, the great Popes to Luther and Loyola. And the task can be accomplished.

When this first task is completed in all the civilisations, or at least in all those which have had contact with each other, the second remains of tracing their influence, one-sided or reciprocal. Here again, an example will serve the purpose and will show how illuminating the theory is. If we take two great conquerors of the classical world, Alexander and Cæsar,

we shall find that the history books are unsatisfactory in telling us the real importance of each, his real meaning. Alexander we shall find is said to have spread Hellenism to the Indus and to have destroyed Greek particularism. Cæsar is hailed as one of the great figures of history, but little reason is given, save that he conquered Gaul and Pompey—and failed to make himself king. If we judge them first from their place in their own civilisation we shall find that they are representative of the "spirit of their age." Alexander is the exact parallel of Napoleon, but if we have no ideas of what Napoleon really achieved, that will hardly help us. Napoleon, it may be remembered, represents the force that makes way for the great ideas of the nineteenth centuries, the passing of the civilisation from its "Hellenic" to its "Hellenistic" stage, the falling to pieces of the strict form of the State, the elevation of the "*tiers état*" to identity with the nation, the rise of industry, of science, of Socialism, of ideas and ideals, the increase of commerce and the commercialisation of the soul. All this, and more, we shall find equally to be the significance of Alexander, and it is of greater importance than the battles he won or

the marches he undertook. These are romantic enough and rouse our wonder and admiration, but in themselves they are of little worth; they receive meaning when we realise that Alexander was the last of the Greeks, the last of those who were somehow the realisation on a vast scale of the type of mind which existed in the Homeric heroes, which fights because it must, not for a cause, and which is driven on by some force which is almost more powerful than itself. Alexander is as exuberant as Achilles or as a Greek statue, and as concentrated on himself and the present. Motives he had of course, as patriotic as those of Achilles, but they were not those assigned to him by modern critics. His attempt, if he really made it, to join East and West, was futile and bound to fail; and that is about all that we can find for him, unless it be the purely negative task of destroying the Persian Empire. That work was to become important, but in a way which he could not have guessed; and it is his Napoleonic work that is the most interesting.

Cæsar, in the same way, we may first study from his position in his civilisation. He prepares the way for the empire stage, but is himself still one of the great individuals who ap-

pear when the form of the State is wholly loosened, and government and power fall into the hands of any who have the will. In this regard he is a "Cæsaristic" figure in the strict sense of the term. But he is more. In the ancient world at least, the power of finance waned after the time of Cæsar, and it is when the real political sense revives in a few who have the energy and wish to direct the State that the Empire appears. (This, it may be remarked incidentally, is the chief reason for doubting the forecast made in the last chapter that America would be the imperial power; for she may be so dominated by finance and so lacking in political inspiration that the empire may fall under the control of some other country which has the quality that America lacks.) In Rome, which is synonymous with the ancient world, Cæsar faces both ways; he still rules by finance like a Cecil Rhodes, but after the final defeat of the Republicans at Thapsus, the political predominates over the financial, and, but for the unlucky murder, of which intellectuals like Cicero were the real instigators, it is conceivable that the Empire might have been founded in the full sense by Julius, and not by Augustus, a far smaller figure.

From the point of view of the classical civilisation, then, we may view Alexander and Cæsar as men with the ideas of their own period; and their "meaning" will become all the fuller if we find in them the manifestation of the particular spirit which moved their age. But history has to do more than work out the tangle of each civilisation; it has to trace the effects of one on another. In the classical it may be said almost with truth, that its course was hardly influenced by other powers, ideas or traditions. It is true that there are traces of Semitic and Indian influence in Greek thought, of Egypt in Greek art; but the political, mathematical, literary and religious development was hardly touched at all. The classical idea was far too much averse to any feeling for history to care much about other cultures or countries, except so far as to satisfy her natural curiosity. Since the days of the classical civilisation, however, there have been two enormous influences at work which have given most of us a wrong view of history and the forces that control it. These two influences, it need hardly be said, are Christianity and the Holy Roman Empire; and they are the work of two men, Alexander and Cæsar. Had

it not been for the particular way in which Alexander's work was carried out, the Eastern Roman Empire would not have been acquired at the time and in the manner in which it was. Had it not been for the expansion of Hellenism as far as Syria and Mesopotamia, and even further, the influence of the Roman culture would have come to an end in the west of Asia Minor. As a result, Christianity which began as a small sect inside Judaism and was limited to Palestine, would never have had a St. Paul, and even had it had Paul, there would have been no such expansion of Christianity in the large towns and ultimately in Rome. So much we may justly take to be the result of Alexander's work. The further expansion of Christianity, until it became the basis of the Papacy and the Holy Roman Empire which were the foundation of the political aspect of that Empire, we may regard as due to Cæsar. It was he who restored energy to the imperium, so that it did not fall to pieces during the next fifty years; it was he who adopted Augustus, and Augustus had the insight to choose well those ministers who defeated Antony for and with him; it was this that retained the centre of the Empire at Rome instead of shifting it as Antony would

have done to a more convenient point at Alexandria; it was this that gave to Europe a continuous tradition. In short, we may measure the importance of the two men we have been discussing by trying to think out the course of our own civilisation, if it had known neither Christianity nor the Holy Roman Empire.

These and similar applications will appeal to the average man, and history written on these lines will increase the interest of all its readers and extend the vision of their imagination. It may lead to neglect of details of wars and battles, but that is little loss except to the military historian; it will certainly lead to concentration on the more important forces which underlie and direct the development of civilisations. It may lead still further than we have been able to indicate, to a knowledge of the temporal determination of events, to a realisation that there is a law controlling the periodicity of events and changes. And more than ever there will crop up the difficult problem of determinism, which troubles the religious and the philosophical; and only a resort to mysticism or a failure of interest will finally solve it.

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